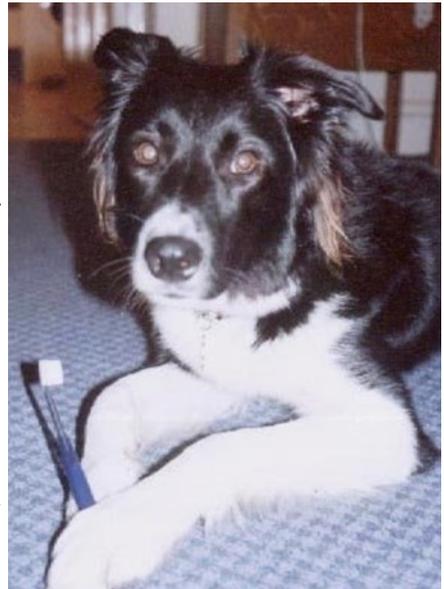




Animals have teeth too

Dogs come in all shapes and sizes depending on what breed they are. Some are more prone to dental problems than others, mainly linked with the shape and conformation of their jaw. Some breeds are considered normal if they have an overshot jaw, where as this would be considered abnormal for other breeds. Some breeds have long noses and plenty of room for the teeth to sit in a neat row, while others have very short noses. A short nose dog, (brachycephalic), still have more or less the same amount of teeth as the ones with long noses, but in order for all the teeth to fit in the jaw, they end up sitting behind each other in a somewhat crowded fashion.

Regardless of what type of smile your beloved pooch has, they would all benefit from regular dental hygiene. The best way to maintain clean teeth, is the same as for yourself, regular tooth brushing. If you start when your dog is still a puppy, then you may find it a pleasant experience that your dog comes to enjoy. Always remember not to use human toothpaste, your dog would prefer one with chicken or malt flavour, and this is much safer too.



If on the other hand you do not have time to brush your dog's teeth every night, then there is a liquid that prevents buildup of plaque if added to the drinking water. Mix up a new batch every morning and if more water is needed throughout the day, provide fresh water until the next batch is mixed up the following morning.

Other options include providing chew bones such as raw hide bones, pig's ears for larger dogs and lamb's ears for smaller dogs. You can also get various dental treats or dental chew toys. A rag toy works almost like dental floss when your dog pulls and chews on it in an attempt to pull it apart as fast as possible.

There are also various prescription diets available that necessitate more chewing action while your dog is munching at their dinner. This is achieved by the special composition of the dental biscuits that do not crumble at the slightest crunch of teeth but remain in chunks so that your dog has to chew more.

However, sometimes it doesn't matter what you do. Some dogs will need a trip to the vets in order to have their teeth cleaned and even have some removed. So if you notice any bad breath, or swelling of the jaw, especially below the eye, then contact your vet and get your dog's teeth checked out. Untreated dental disease can lead to systemic disease such as kidney failure, liver failure or even heart disease. It pays to stay one step ahead.

Get your puppy off to a good start

Everyone knows that puppies are not adult dogs. But still, this is not always taken into consideration when it comes to how you treat your puppy. It pays to get things right from the start and set your puppy off to a good start.

Flea treatment and worming is important for all dogs, but puppies are more susceptible to the damaging effects of parasites than adult dogs. Furthermore, parasites trigger immune response within the body and can thus be a precursor for allergies. A heavy flea infestation can even be the cause of anemia in young puppies. So it pays to treat for fleas monthly even if you don't see any fleas. Puppies should be given worm treatment every 2 weeks until they are 12 weeks old, and then monthly until at least 6 months, preferably 12 months.



Keeping the bedding (and cage) clean prevents buildup of dust. Dogs can be allergic to house dust mites just as much as some humans. They can even be allergic to dander and pollen, amongst other environmental agents. These allergens can be kept to a minimum by use of frequent brushing or in some cases baths. Be careful when choosing a shampoo for your puppy, the skin pH of a dog is not the same as for humans, so use a shampoo dedicated for dogs, preferably for puppies.

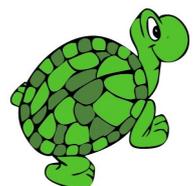
There is a myriad of dog food available on the market, some better than others. A rule of thumb is to stick to a type of food that contains little if any artificial colours, flavours or preservatives. It also pays to stay clear of human food such as left overs as some human food can be poisonous to dogs, such as asparagus, avocado, grapes, onions, raisins and some peppers.

Finally, don't forget about vaccinations. All puppies need at least 2 injections in order to provide protection against Parvovirus, Distemper and Hepatitis. Depending on the age at time of the second injection, it may be necessary to give a third injection before full protection is achieved. From then on, your dog will require a booster every 1 – 2 years for lifetime protection. Depending on your dog's lifestyle, it may pay to include a Canine Cough vaccination too, especially if you are planning on using a boarding kennel when you go away on holidays.



Did you know.....

- Hedgehogs have weak eyesight but a strong sense of hearing and smell. They can swim, climb and run surprising quickly over short distances
- A ladybird might eat more than 5,000 insects in its lifetime!
- Leopards are skilled climbers, and like to rest in the branches of trees during the day. They are strong beasts, too, and can carry their heavy prey up into the trees so that pesky scavengers, such as hyenas, don't steal their meal!
- Fruit flies were the first living creatures to be sent in to space.
- Turtles have a hard shell that protects them like a shield, this upper shell is called a 'carapace' and their lower shell called a 'plastron'.
- Honey bees are fab flyers. They fly at a speed of around 25km per hour and beat their wings 200 times per second!



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