

KEEP 'EM SMILIN'

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Dental care tips for your pet

There's news that may bring a smile to both pet owners and their loyal companions. Services and products are making it easier to address a pet's need for oral care.

According to American Veterinary Medical Association, periodontal disease is the most common health issue in pets. It's also estimated that almost 80 percent of U.S. pets suffer from periodontal disease by age 3.

This is a cause for concern, since periodontal disease encourages the growth of bacteria and development of other overall health risk factors that can get into the pet's bloodstream.

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The good news is that periodontal disease is preventable. Comprehensive dental care — oral assessment and treatment by the veterinarian at least annually, and daily prevention at home — helps to ensure a healthy pet. This is more than a luxury, since many veterinary dentists believe that good oral health can increase a pet's life span — on average — by about

two years.

A leading manufacturer of pet treats with a health benefit, The Greenies Company, offers canine dental chews and feline dental treats.

Clinically proven to help reduce plaque and tartar buildup, the canine dental chews are recognized by the Veterinary Oral Health Council with its Seal of Acceptance for plaque and tartar control.

The canine chews are said to be nutritionally complete and balanced for adult dogs. Fortified with vitamins and minerals, they contain antioxidants derived from fruits and vegetables. Plus, they're chewy and highly soluble for safe digestion.

The feline treats are proven to help reduce plaque and tartar buildup and are said to be preferred by cats four to one over their regular brand of treat.

They're made from a natural formula, contain less than two calories per piece and are nutritionally complete and balanced for adult cats, fortified with vitamins, minerals and taurine for optimum feline health.

Both the canine dental chews and the feline treats are available from many veterinary clinics and at most independent and pet specialty stores. Story courtesy napsnet.com