

HOW TO GROOM A CAT

Cats groom themselves not only to make themselves look good and clean dust, dirt, and lose hairs from their coats, but also to remove some of the parasites that find their way onto a cat such as fleas and mites. In the warmer months cats also groom to help keep themselves cool. Yet another reason a cat may groom itself is to relieve stress.

In their natural, wild state felines shed their winter coat in the spring and fill out their coats in the fall, in preparation for the colder months. The consequence of living in a controlled environment means a life of almost constant shedding for your cat. Most cats require human involvement in this.

The more a cat grooms itself, the more of its shed hair is likely to be swallowed. Swallowed hair can accumulate in the cat's stomach and is brought up in the form of a hairball. Regular grooming will reduce the the instances of hairball vomiting.

A cat that is overweight or older may not be able to reach its entire body for grooming, which makes it essential that you groom them regularly to keep up with the constant hair turnover. However, you should not wait until your pet is heavier or older to start grooming. Ideally you should start grooming when your cat is very young. Longhaired cats require daily grooming.

Tugging and pulling on your cat's hair coat hurts your cat and they will quickly begin to resist your attempts to groom. If at first you are unable to fully groom your cat, take it in stages until you are able to fully groom them. A slicker brush is a brush that has bristles that are bent at the ends, this should get deep into your shorthaired cats coat, but do not brush too hard, especially if your cat does not have a thick coat. Longer haired cats should be initially brushed with a pin brush (one with metal bristles with the tips coated) to separate the hair, then the use of a comb to separate out tangles. Remember don't tug, the use of detangling spray may help with Troublesome knots.

If matting and knotting are really bad you may need to arrange for a professional grooming appointment for spot shaving or a full body cut. Afterwards, a regular daily grooming session should prevent the same situation from occurring again.



WHERE TO LICENSE YOUR CAT OR DOG

Please note that proof of a current Rabies vaccine is necessary to license your pet

Fargo

Valley Veterinary Hospital - 3210 Main Ave 701.232.3391

OR

City Hall Collections Office - 200 3rd St N 701.241.1300

Moorhead

Moorhead Police Dept. - 915 9th Ave N 218.299.5120

West Fargo

West Fargo Police Dept. - 800 4th Ave E 701.433.5500

Casselton

Casselton City Hall - 701.347.4861

Valley City

Valley City Police Dept. - 216 2nd Ave NE 701.845.3110

Dental Health and Brushing Your Pet's Teeth

Dental health is important in your pet's health, just as important as it is in human health. Brushing your pet's teeth on a regular basis will help prevent tartar, periodontal disease, and bacteria from affecting your pet's teeth and health. Bacteria in the blood system can affect your pet's liver, kidneys, and heart.

Plaque can turn in to tartar in about 36 hours. Brushing that plaque off before it becomes tartar is key. That is why brushing teeth every day is ideal. Once tartar is cemented onto the tooth, a professional dental cleaning is needed to remove that tartar. Regular brushing can help reduce plaque and bacteria from causing problems in your pet's mouth.

Start slow. Get your pet used to you holding them for the brushing and used to you lifting their lips to see the teeth. Introduce them to pet toothpaste by placing some on your finger and letting them have a taste. Praise your pet when you are done.

Start to introduce your finger to your pet's teeth. Start with a couple teeth at a time. When they get used to you "brushing" a couple teeth, you can add a few more teeth until eventually you can brush every tooth at each sitting. Remember this can take up to several weeks, so don't get discouraged.

When they accept the finger brush, a soft bristled pet or child's toothbrush can be used. A piece on non-bulky cloth, such as gauze, can also be used. Remember to praise your pet and give them a reward afterwards.

You only need to address the lip surfaces of teeth, paying particular attention to the gumline.

NEVER use human toothpaste! Fluoride can be toxic to your pet!



FREQUENTLY ASKED ANIMAL DENTAL QUESTIONS

Why does my pet's breathe smell so bad?

The most common source of halitosis is overgrowth of bacteria in the mouth. Normal breath in dogs and cats should not smell bad, but may smell of the food they just ate. If they ate something odiferous their breath may smell bad temporarily, but should clear in an hour or so.

My animal's teeth are dirty. I don't want my animal to go under anesthesia, is there something else I can do?

Teeth must be cleaned to remove plaque and tartar. While daily brushing is necessary and recommended, it cannot keep all teeth entirely clean indefinitely. There is no way for a client/groomer to effectively scale a pet's teeth while they are awake. While the cosmetic effect may be pleasing, 2/3 of the tooth is located under the gum line and underlying disease is being missed, because of this tooth loss and pain can still result. Animals, just like humans, must have periodic professional cleanings, To do this thoroughly and completely, anesthesia is required. After the initial scaling and oral health evaluation, the client can help maintain the pet's oral health by daily brushing.

How often should I brush my pet's teeth? How often should I have them professionally cleaned?

For best results teeth should be brushed at least once every other day. The amount of time between dental cleanings depends on the individual animal. Some dogs and cats, particularly the smaller breeds, or those with "squished" faces, need cleaning at least once a year. Larger breeds may be able to go up to every 2-3 years between cleanings. The best way to be sure is to have your veterinarian access your pet's oral health at each examination.

What is the risk of anesthesia?

Generally, anesthesia poses less risk than most people think. In the past decades anesthetic agents have become safer and anesthesia done properly, with preparation and care, is very safe. For older animals the actual risk needs to be evaluated by the doctor because each patient is different. Blood panels, chest x-rays, EKGs, and other tests may be performed before the procedure to fully evaluate the risks.

Why must teeth be pulled?

Teeth are usually extracted because of severe periodontal disease, fractures, resorptive lesions, misalignment, and other problems that cause discomforts or difficulty chewing.

Can you do a consultation and dental cleaning/surgery on the same day?

We prefer to do our consultations and treatments or procedures on separate days. It is very important for us to be able to plan our procedures so that all our patients can be treated in a timely manner and our staff can perform efficiently and thoroughly, giving your pet the best medical care. Examinations are done in advance of treatment so we can assess the actual time needed to complete the planned work and provide you with a closer estimate of time and cost.

Where do I go to find your prices?

It is impossible to give you an accurate estimate on costs without evaluating the actual oral care needs of your pet. We will provide you with an estimate range of costs for the planned procedure at the time of the initial oral examination. We make every effort to be thorough and accurate in our treatment plans and estimates, and to stay within the,. We will call you if alterations to the plan are indicated and will recommend the best option for your animal companion.