

Samples? No Thank You.

We occasionally get requests for samples of **healthymouth™** to be used in various ways. The short answer is, no.

The Long Answers

Clinics request samples for two different reasons. I will explain why we do not endorse or support either.

Small quantities to send home with clients after a dental procedure:

Some clinics send home small amounts of **healthymouth™** with patients after a dental procedure so the clients can try it out before they commit to the purchase a full jug. This sends the wrong message and will dramatically reduce owner follow-through and compliance.

If you have not already done so, I encourage you to have a look at the Hill's/AAHA study on owner compliance. Among the key findings was that if we give owners a vague, inconsistent or contradictory set of recommendations, owners are inclined to get confused and when confused, the safest thing for them to do is to do nothing.

For example, use of language such as “I suggest” or “you might consider” or “we recommend” leads to poor compliance. These wishy-washy statements lack conviction and are unconvincing. On the other hand, if you truly believe a patient needs a certain test or treatment, then say “we need to...”. Don’t be vague. Tell the owner what needs to be done and why and your rate of obtaining informed consent will go up.

So, back to samples: **healthymouth™** is to be used *every day for as long as the pet has teeth*. It is something new and novel to be added to the pet’s life and it may take time for the animal to accept the subtle flavour and odour it imparts to the drinking water. If you send home a small sample, it suggests that it is a product that only needs to be used for a short time (wrong message). Also, if you only send home a small amount, it may not be enough to introduce it

gradually over a period of days or weeks. Also, by sending home a small amount, you are expressing a lack of confidence in the product and giving the message to the owners that they can try it if they want and then it is up to them if they want to continue or not (vague and wishy-washy).

I would wager that for clinics that send home small samples, fewer than 10% of their clients return to purchase a jug. Why? Not because they do not care about their pet’s oral health. It is because they were not given a clear and confident message that, “your pet needs daily home plaque control between professional treatments and this product can be a big help in achieving that.”

Remember, plaque forms on your own teeth between the time you go to bed at night and wake up in the morning. If you do not send home a good supply of **healthymouth™** after an oral hygiene procedure, the effects of that professional cleaning will not last very long and the patient and owner will have gotten far less value for their investment.

Since **healthymouth™** products come with a 100% palatability guarantee there is zero risk to your clients in taking home a 4 to 8 month supply at the end of the procedure. If after trying to gradually introduce the treated water, their pets will not drink it, they return the product and get their money back.

So, give a strong, consistent and definite message to the owners of your periodontal patients. Do not send home a small sample for them to try and leave it to them to follow through by coming back to buy more when and if they get around to it. Send home a jug at the end of the procedure. Tell them why daily home plaque control between professional visits is crucial and then explain to them how **healthymouth™** fits into that comprehensive plan. Send home a jug size that will last between 6 and 12 months (given the size and number of animals that will be drinking the treated water). And send home a hand out that explains how to

introduce **healthymouth**™ gradually for the best chances of animal compliance.

Just a jug or two to try on a few pets to see how we like it before placing a real order.

Evidence-based veterinary medicine is all the rage these days, as well it should be. So many things we used to think were true have turned out to be false (and vice versa) under the lens of legitimate scientific investigation. In our paper, Evidence-Based Veterinary Dentistry: A systemic review of homecare for prevention of periodontal disease in dogs and cats (Roudebush P, Logan E, Hale FA. JVetDent 22(1); March 2005, pp 6-10), we discussed the various levels of evidence. Grade 1 evidence is obtained from properly designed, randomized, controlled studies done in the target species. Grade IV evidence comes from studies conducted in other species, reports from expert committees, descriptive studies, case reports, pathophysiologic justification and opinion of respected experts developed on the basis of their clinical experience.

Where on the spectrum would we place a study that consists of a general practitioner taking a sample home to try on their own pet(s)? This is not a study, it is not a case report, it is not an expert committee. At best it is anecdotal observation on one single (or maybe a few) isolated subject(s). As a grade of evidence, this would rank lower than Grade-IV.

To provide samples to clinics for these small, uncontrolled, non-randomized, casual observations would cost **HealthyMouth** LLC some money (product, shipping, handling...). As with all companies, **HealthyMouth** LLC has a finite operating budget and must justify all expenditures in reference to income (100% of which comes from sale of product). Karen could have spent some of this income to pay for 'free samples' for clinics to try the product. Instead, she opted to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars funding product development, multiple Grade-1 studies and applications to the Veterinary Oral Health Council (all of which have been successful). She has spent this money to get you the evidence you really need to be

able to recommend **healthymouth**™ for your patients with confidence.

It's Up To You

There is nothing to stop you from buying a jug of product and repackaging it in small bottles to send home as samples. We believe this will be counter-productive and will reduce client compliance and sales. Worse, it will reduce the number of animals who get to benefit from this proven product. Therefore, **HealthyMouth** LLC will not provide 'free' product for this purpose and we recommend against this practice.

There is also nothing to stop you from purchasing a few jugs to "try out" but again, the value of such an exercise is very limited and having already funded multiple Grade-1 studies and VOHC applications, **HealthyMouth** LLC will not be funding such anecdotal observations by providing 'free' product or shipping of same.