

## When to Introduce **healthymouth™** water additive

No product, no matter how fantastic, will work if used improperly. So how do you introduce and use **healthymouth™** water additive to get the maximum benefit?

First let's review a few points.

- Periodontal disease is caused by dental plaque and the host's response to it.
- Plaque is the fuzzy little sweaters that grow on your teeth between when you brush them before going to bed and you get up in the morning (ie, really fast).
- Tartar is mineralized plaque, therefore, if you prevent plaque, you prevent tartar but simply preventing tartar does not necessarily prevent plaque or improve oral health. On the other hand, plaque left undisturbed for a few days can mineralize to tartar, making it much harder to remove.
- After a professional periodontal treatment, we want to start daily home plaque control immediately (same day or next day) so that plaque is not given a chance to form, mature and mineralize.
- **healthymouth™** is not a treatment for dental disease. It is part of a daily plaque-control program between professional dental evaluations and treatments.
- Explaining dental disease and its management can overwhelm owners if it is all dumped on them at one visit.
- Many periodontal patients require surgery and need time to heal before the owners can use mechanical means of plaque control (diets, chews, tooth brushing).
- Many periodontal patients are sent home with medications post-op (analgesics, antibiotics).
- While we know of no contra-indications for **healthymouth™** it does constitute a diet change and so should be introduced gradually.

Here is our first choice (Plan A) for the best way to introduce **healthymouth™**.

When you determine that a patient requires dental treatment, collect the pre-op blood samples and talk to the owner right then about how to maintain good oral hygiene post-op. Use this opportunity to dole out a portion of the client education. Then book the procedure and send the owner home with a supply of **healthymouth™** so that the owner and patient can get

used to the product. Then, regardless of what the actual procedure entails and regardless of what medications the animal is sent home with, the patient can continue drinking **healthymouth™** for plaque control immediately post-op, giving plaque no head-start.

If for some reason you cannot introduce your patient to **healthymouth™** pre-op, you are left introducing it post-op. If you have not sent home any medications you can absolutely start the introduction the next day.

On the other hand, you may have sent home some medications. Again, we know of no contra-indications or adverse interactions with any medications. However, if you introduce **healthymouth™** at the same time as medication(s) and the patient develops any digestive upset, the client may be inclined to blame the **healthymouth™** and will lose confidence in the product. To avoid this, we recommend that owners not start introducing **healthymouth™** until the medications are all finished. The obvious disadvantage of this timing is that it could be weeks post-op before the patient is getting the full benefit of **healthymouth™** and this gives plaque a real head-start. That is why we really prefer our plan A.

Actually, even better than Plan A is to start your patients on **healthymouth™** when they are puppies and kittens. This has several desirable effects.

- It lets your clients know that oral care is a life-long, daily affair, similar to feeding and exercising their pet.
- It gives the message that oral care is important and deserves attention from the beginning.
- It gets you in the habit of being pro-active with oral care rather than being reactive.
- It puts prevention where it belongs - before there is disease.

You really cannot start a preventative program too early.

What about the topical gels and sprays? Applying each of these does require some handling of the pet's mouth. For a pet that may already have dental disease, such handling may cause pain. Therefore, I would say do **not** try to start applying these topical agents until after the pet has had a thorough oral/dental evaluation, appropriate treatment and has had time to heal.