

Vets Encourage Brushing During Pet Dental Health Month

National campaign addresses large percentage of oral disease in pets.

More than 80 percent of dogs and cats age 4 or older show signs of oral disease, and veterinarians want to teach people to provide better dental care during National Pet Dental Health Month in February.

The campaign, now in its 12th year, is an attempt to convince pet owners that their furry friends should have their teeth brushed daily, and to schedule regular dental checkups.

Hills Pet Nutrition sent 25,000 dental health kits to veterinary clinics across the United States in an effort to educate pet owners. The kits included brochures on basic oral health for pets, plus novelty items like balloons and buttons.

Implementing a clinical dental program to promote canine and feline oral home care is the paramount responsibility of veterinarians across the country, said veterinarian Ken Capron, past president of the American Veterinary Dental College.

The most frequently diagnosed health problem for pets, oral disease often develops through plaque buildup, which can lead to more serious problems such as periodontitis, receding gums, bad breath and tooth loss.

National Pet Dental Health Month is sponsored by the American Veterinary Medical Association, the American Veterinary Dental Society, the Academy of Veterinary Dentistry, the American Veterinary Dental College and Hills Pet Nutrition.

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