

Chew Toys and Dental Health

There's really no reason for any canine companion to suffer from poor oral hygiene! Given the current proliferation of toys, treats and other dental products on the market, not to mention all the information out there about healthy nutrition, home dental care and Veterinary intervention.



Utilizing chew toys to aid in dental health is an excellent option for helping to keep a dog's mouth in good shape. Chew toy play begins in puppyhood and KONG Rubber toys are an excellent way of establishing healthy chewing habits by teaching appropriate chewing behaviour. Chew toys assist with good oral hygiene regimes by allowing the dog to apply the simple mechanical action of repetitive chewing. Which also means that a dog can be encouraged to have fun whilst also cleaning his teeth and gums.

The trick is to make sure you're getting a non-toxic quality product made from safe materials or natural ingredients.

Not all chew toys are created equal, cheaply made products present the risk of easily breaking, splintering or falling apart and can pose a choking or gastrointestinal hazard. Look for toys made with safe, non-toxic materials like natural rubber. KONG rubber products are 100% all natural high grade rubber with no fillers and chalks that can cause damage to tooth enamel. The smooth and flexible surfaces of rubber offer some elasticity when chewed therefore avoiding the rigidity and splintering effects of bones or sticks that could potentially cause teeth to chip. As a bonus, they can be filled with a mix of hard kibble and soft dog food to encourage the dog to remain engaged in play for longer periods of time.

The KONG Dental toy range features 'Denta Ridges' or grooves that help massage the dog's gums and clean his teeth by removing food debris and plaque. To encourage chewing, the ridges or toy interiors can be stuffed with quality treats, peanut butter, or some other healthy snack.

As the dog masticates to remove the treats, he exercises his jaws and gums while cleaning his teeth. Canine toothpaste can also be applied in the toy's ridges or grooves.

Some toys incorporate a rope feature which acts as the equivalent of dental floss for dogs, the rope when chewed can create light abrasion to remove soft surface tartar whilst also working in-between the teeth. However as rope is not as durable as rubber these toys should be used under direct supervision and replaced when they begin to show significant wear.



Keep in mind that even the best quality toys and treats aren't 100% foolproof. Always recommend supervision when a dog is chewing on any toy or treat and remove it should it start to break into chunks that could be swallowed whole and potentially cause a choking hazard or intestinal obstruction. Frequent inspection of the dog's toys is recommended, examine each toy for wear and tear. Toys showing signs of wear i.e. holes or pieces tearing off should be discarded and replaced.



Article supplied by Rachael James on behalf of KONG® Company Pty Ltd