

# Dental Condition Scoring Chart

HEALTHY SMILES  
HAPPY PETS

## Check the condition of your pet's teeth

Plaque can sometimes be seen as a soft sticky material on the teeth but usually is not visible until it hardens to form **tartar** or **calculus**. Tartar, in itself, is not damaging to gums, but often hides gum disease or appears after the damage has occurred. Bacteria grow in the soft plaque causing gums to become red and inflamed.

This is called **gingivitis**, a symptom of **periodontal disease (gum disease)**. Further build-up of plaque allows bacteria to infect below the gum line, leading to **periodontitis**. This is the inflammation of the tissues supporting the teeth and is very common in pets, especially with poor dental hygiene.

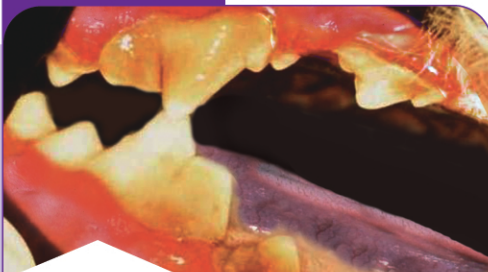
### NORMAL



#### Healthy Gingiva (Gums)

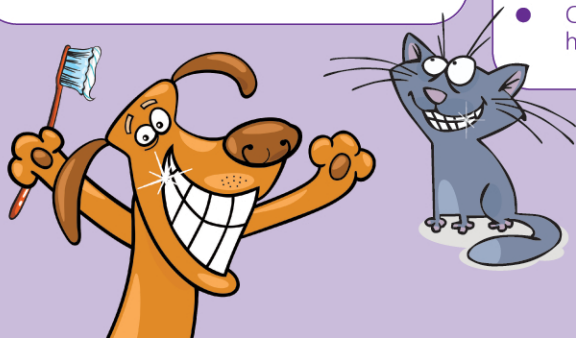
- Salmon pink
- Gums firm and fitting closely to the tooth
- No bleeding on chewing or brushing
- Gum attached to the base of the tooth

### STAGE 1



#### Gingivitis

- Red and swollen along the gum margins
- Plaque on the teeth causes irritation
- Mild bad breath (halitosis)
- Some bleeding on chewing or brushing
- Completely reversible with good homecare: optimum is daily brushing



Pets need dental  
care too...

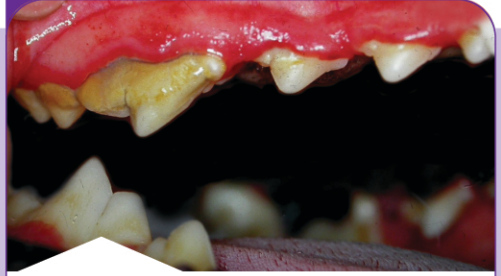
## STAGE 2



### Mild Periodontitis

- Gingivitis and inflammation of the deeper tissues between the tooth and the bone
- Loss of gum attachment to the tooth - leading to shallow pockets (gaps)
- Loss of bone around the tooth socket
- Progression may be halted by a combination of adequate dental homecare and professional treatment from your vet

## STAGE 3



### Moderate Periodontitis

- Deepening pockets between tooth and gum
- Generally more plaque and tartar present with significant bad breath
- Often marked gingivitis with noticeable bleeding on chewing or brushing
- Tooth could become loose
- Progression can be significantly slowed by veterinary intervention and continuous homecare

## STAGE 4



### Advanced Periodontitis

- Deeper infected pockets between tooth and gum
- Usually severe gingivitis
- High levels of plaque and tartar with significant bad breath
- Advanced loss of bone support and gum attachment
- Often tooth mobility
- Contact your vet immediately. Extraction or eventual loss of the tooth are the only outcome

## Gum disease is not the only oral problem experienced by dogs and cats.

Fractured teeth - commonly broken by direct trauma (e.g. a blow), or by chewing on hard objects such as bones and other objects - nylon bones, hooves, antlers and stones. Worn teeth, tooth decay and even oral tumours, can be identified by regular dental checks with your vet and good homecare.



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Veterinary Care**