



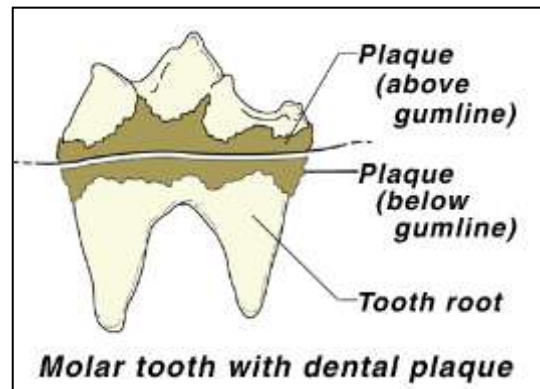
NORTHPARK Animal Hospital

TARTAR PREVENTION

How does tartar form, and what does it do?

Plaque is a gummy substance that forms on the teeth within a few hours after a meal. Within 24 hours, plaque hardens into tartar.

Tartar is harmful in two ways. First, it serves as a place where bacteria can reside and multiply in the mouth. There is substantial scientific evidence that bacteria from tartar are absorbed into the blood stream and deposited in various organs. Heart and kidney disease often result. Second, tartar builds up along the gum line. As the tartar enlarges, it pushes the gums away from the roots of the teeth. Eventually, the teeth will loosen and fall out.



How can I prevent tartar formation on my dog's teeth?

After your dog's teeth have been cleaned, we recommend beginning home dental care to help reduce plaque and tartar buildup.

1. Brushing your pet's teeth is an effective means of removing plaque before it turns into tartar. We recommend using a toothpaste made especially for dogs. Brushing should be done at least twice weekly (preferably daily), but we understand that not all dogs will tolerate it. Special brushes are made that make this task easier for you and your pet.
2. Use an oral rinse. This type of product helps reduce the bacterial count in the mouth, resulting in improved breath.
3. Cleaning the teeth in 6-12 months or at the first sign of tartar buildup is very beneficial to most dogs. This will prevent damage to the gums and roots.