

WHO SHOULD BE ON healthymouth™?

The short answer is **all of your patients that have teeth.**

Contraindication:

After several years on the market and considerable research (VOHC trials etc), there are no known contraindications for **healthymouth™**. That said, there is always the possibility of an individual animal having sensitivity to any of the ingredients, so as with all things, if an individual seems unable to tolerate the treated water, they should not have it.

Puppies and Kittens:

healthymouth™ is part of a **preventative** oral care program. For prevention to work, it must start before there is disease. Therefore, starting **healthymouth™** for puppies and kittens is appropriate.

The primary teeth are going to be shed before they have time to develop periodontal disease but during teething, there is inflammation around the exfoliating primary teeth and the erupting adult teeth. **healthymouth™** would help maintain good oral hygiene during this time of open wounds and immature gingival attachment. Then once the adult teeth are in place, the animal (and its owners) are already well in to the routine of using **healthymouth™**.

Daily plaque control is a life long thing, just like feeding, exercise, grooming... Therefore, you really cannot start too early and starting early reinforces the message about pro-active and preventative dental care.

Post COHAT (Comprehensive Oral Health Assessment and Treatment)

Any animal that has had an oral hygiene procedure or periodontal treatment should be started on **healthymouth™** post-op. As with your own teeth, plaque starts to accumulate on the crowns of the teeth within hours of a professional cleaning. If the owners are not doing daily plaque control after a professional cleaning, the teeth are not going to stay clean for very long.

Now here is a catch. If the patient has had periodontal surgery or extractions, then it needs to have its mouth left alone for two weeks for healing. This means soft food, no hard toys or treats and the owners are not to touch the mouth for 2 weeks. If the plaque control is daily tooth brushing and/or eating a plaque retardant diet, this two weeks of softened food and hands-off gives the plaque a two week head start. But the animal can be drinking **healthymouth™** during this time.

Here is another catch. If the patient has had periodontal surgery or extractions, then it should be sent home with pain medications and may also be on antibiotics. These can cause digestive upset. If you send the animal home on medications **AND** simultaneously start **healthymouth™** and the animal has some diarrhoea, we will not know what caused it (too many suspects). Therefore I usually suggest waiting until the patient is off all medications before starting to introduce **healthymouth™**. Again, that gives plaque a head start, which is not ideal.

Pre COHAT

To get around the two catches above, it would actually be a great idea to send **healthymouth™** home before the animal comes in for the COHAT. Have the owners start introducing it a few weeks pre-op so that the animal and the owners are comfortable using it and the adjustment period is already behind them. Then they can continue with it immediately post op (same day) so plaque gets no head start.

Can Fluffy Drink Scruffy's healthymouth™?

So Fluffy has had a COHAT and you have sent home **healthymouth™**. But Fluffy shares her water bowl with Scruffy who has *not* just had a COHAT. Is this a problem? Not at all.

healthymouth™ is not intended as a treatment for dental disease or an alternative to professional care. However, as long as that is understood, there is no problem letting untreated pets in the house drink the **healthymouth™**

you have sent home with the pet that has just had treatment.

Then when Scruffy does come in for his COHAT, he is already on **healthymouth™** and all set to keep drinking it immediately post op so plaque gets no head start.

Are there pets who should not be on healthymouth™?

Aside from the very rare animal that might not tolerate **healthymouth™** just about all dogs and cats can have **healthymouth™**, however, not every pet needs it.

What was that?!? Did a veterinary dentist just suggest that not every pet needs daily plaque control? Well, sort of. We have all seen some animals (dogs and cats) who have had no dental treatment in the past, no dental diet, no homecare yet they have excellent oral hygiene, gingival and periodontal health (remember, you can only make that determination after a thorough examination under general anaesthetic and with whole-mouth intra-oral dental radiographs). Or you may have a patient whose owners are doing daily tooth brushing and/or are feeding a plaque-retardant diet.

Anyway, if you have a mature patient who has maintained excellent periodontal and gingival health for years without **healthymouth™**, there may be little to be gained by adding **healthymouth™** after treatment. In the interest of using our client's resources effectively, this is a case in which you might not bother with it.

BUT, for a young patient, do NOT assume that it is going to be fine without **healthymouth™** because, as I said before, in order for a preventative strategy to work, it must be in place BEFORE disease has started.

So, WHO SHOULD BE ON healthymouth™?

Basically, all of your patients that have teeth. There will be some exceptions, but having a daily plaque control program in place, including **healthymouth™**, should be your default setting.