



British Veterinary Dental Association

BVDA Position Statement on 'dental' claims for diets, chews and toys. 2020

There are now numerous products in the UK marketplace for dogs and cats either directly advertising 'dental' benefits or suggesting such benefits on the packaging. Although the BVDA has promotion of oral health in animals at its core, it is important that claims made for products are backed by scientific evidence and safety data.

The BVDA would like to see all companies making claims of 'dental' benefits on their products provide evidence of both efficacy and safety, ideally in peer reviewed journals, by holding a VOHC Seal of Approval, or by supplying experimental study evidence freely upon request. Products should also be shown to be safe in the intended species.

There is poor understanding of dental disease and its causes in pet animals among owners, and some professionals. It is important to realise that dental health in animals is normally related to periodontal disease, which directly affects the gums and support of the tooth, rather than affecting the tooth directly. This is unlike humans where caries, which affects the teeth directly, is a more common form of dental disease.

To claim 'dental' benefits, products should be shown to significantly reduce plaque, which is ultimately the cause of periodontal disease. The products should also be safe to swallow, and not cause harm either to the teeth and gums, or elsewhere, such as metabolic or digestive problems.

The BVDA supports the Veterinary Oral Health Council (www.vohc.org) which independently reviews products' evidence of effectiveness for claimed 'dental' benefits, and grants a Seal of Approval to products that pass.