

Base Narrow Canine Teeth

Base narrow canine teeth are when the lower jaw (the mandible) canine teeth are more narrow than on the upper jaw (the maxilla). When this happens, the canine teeth on the lower jaw may penetrate into the gums/palate tissue on the upper jaw, which is painful. Most puppies with this condition have lived with it from the start, therefore, most show little to no signs of pain. Correction should be done early, as this will spare the puppy pain and may allow for a more normal eruption of the adult teeth.



*Note the canine tooth penetration



*Arrows show where the lower canine teeth penetrate the palate.

Treatment involves extractions of the "baby" or deciduous canine teeth. Adult canine teeth typically come in on the mesial (middle) side of the baby tooth. This only makes the proper placement of the adult teeth more likely to come in more medial (toward the middle) and make the position worse if the baby teeth are not removed.

It is not uncommon to see this condition with an overbite. If this is the case, the incisor teeth on the lower jaw may need to be removed as well.

Extractions are the easiest way to *allow* for a more "normal" bite. However, this *does not guarantee* the teeth will come in the correct location. Remember, they are not starting off with a normal bite. We are simply removing any barriers to a normal bite and removing pain.

As the adult canine teeth erupt, we want to institute ball therapy. This has the potential to guide the lower canine teeth more laterally.

Ball Therapy:

This is an intermittent orthodontic device designed to move the canine teeth laterally without surgery.

1. The ball needs to be the size that will just rest between the tips of the canine teeth.

-Not so small that it will rest on the floor of the mouth or be swallowed.

-Not too large that it rests on the tips of the teeth.

2. The ball shape needs to be round or oval.
Kongs or Kong balls, field hockey balls, or soft baseballs work well.
NO Earth balls.

3. The ball needs to be firm but able to deform with pressure.

4. The ball needs to be smooth to avoid teeth wear. NO tennis balls.

Active play for 15 minutes, three times a day. You may play longer.



*The pressure from the ball may force the teeth more laterally.