

## MALPOSITIONED TEETH



Daisy is a tiny teacup poodle. Dogs often have difficulties with dental alignment. Daisy had what is called a "base narrow" defect, where her lower jaw is too narrow, causing her lower teeth to come up too far inside the upper canines, where they dig into the gum or roof of the mouth. Little dogs also frequently have deciduous (baby) teeth that don't fall out when they should. The deciduous canine teeth, which were on the outside of the adult teeth that were coming in, were pushing the adult teeth even further toward the middle of the mouth.

This first picture was taken immediately after extraction of the deciduous canine teeth. The circle is around the left lower canine tooth, which is pressing into the gum just in front of the left upper canine tooth. The abnormally positioned tooth is not quite fully erupted yet.

The second picture was taken about a month later. Removing the deciduous canine tooth allowed the adult tooth to shift into its proper position.

Even though Daisy's alignment isn't perfect, it's now good enough to avoid needing a dental appliance to fix it. We were afraid Daisy would have to go to the veterinary dentist to have a device (picture to right) attached to the upper canine that would press the lower one outwards. Other treatment options for this condition include filing off the tip of a tooth or extracting it.



It's wise for anyone purchasing a puppy to check the mouth carefully – and those of the parent dogs as well. Checking for abnormalities in the anatomy of the teeth and jaws is one of the things we do here at the veterinary hospital at every examination, especially during puppyhood. We want to diagnose abnormalities early as some defects need to be corrected before the adult teeth are fully in. We had to carefully time Daisy's spay surgery to coincide with the ideal time for extracting her retained deciduous teeth in order to give the

lower adult canine teeth the best chance for correcting themselves. Thankfully, for daisy the outcome was a happy one!