

Ball therapy will only work with adult teeth and only in some cases where the lower canines have a clear path to move into the space that they should normally reside between the upper third incisor (the outermost of the little teeth at the very front) and canine (fang tooth). Ball therapy is best instituted when the lower canine (fang) teeth are partially erupted. It becomes more difficult to move teeth orthodontically once the dog has reached 9+ months of age, therefore there is a relatively short window during which ball therapy can be effective.

**ASK YOUR VET**

If you are considering ball therapy and ask them to send us images of each side of the closed mouth from the side with mouth closed, upper lips lifted and lower lips pulled down.

The size and type of the ball or Kong toy is very important. The ball/kong diameter should be the distance between the tips of the two lower canine (fang) teeth plus 50%. Therefore if this distance is 40mm the ball diameter needs to be 60mm. If the ball is too small it will sit between the lower canines and produce no tipping force when the pup bites down. If the ball is too large it will push down on the canines and force them in an abnormal direction, pushing them into the jaw.

The ball should have some give/flex when your puppy bites down. The smooth semi-hollow rubber is best. Tennis balls are very abrasive and the surfaces act like sandpaper when damp and muddy therefore they should not be used as toys for dogs.

Play with your pet should occur in several short burst through the day- ideally for 15 mins each time and up to 6-8 times per day. The ball will only help the teeth to move if it is played with in the very front part of the mouth (not at the sides between the chewing teeth). Please send us repeat photos every 2 weeks so we can evaluate progress. If there is no improvement within 4-8 weeks, then alternative treatment is likely to be recommended.

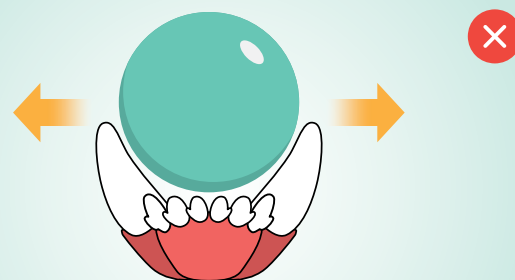
**For further information, please see:**

[Verhaert L 1999 Journal of Veterinary Dentistry 16: 2, 69-75.](#)

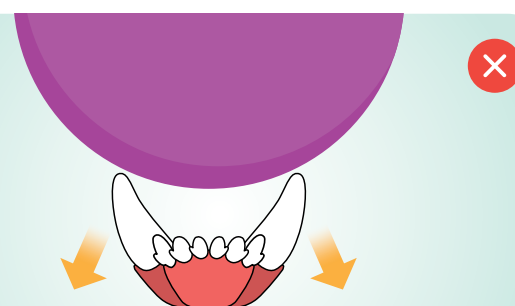
## Ball Therapy



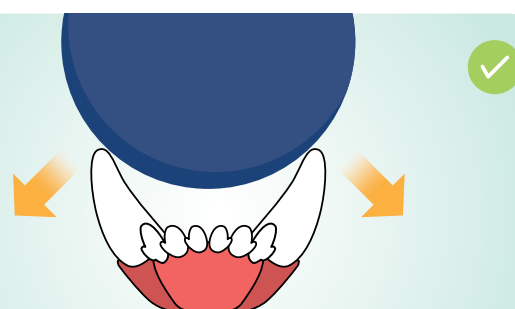
Dog with rubber ball (A) and dog with rubber chew toy in its mouth (B). The potential effect of the toy on linguinally displaced mandibular canine teeth can be clearly seen. The toy subjects the teeth to tipping pressure in a labial direction.



This ball is too small, the forces it exerts will not push the canines out



This ball is too big and the forces it exerts will push the canines down



This ball is perfect and will push the canines in the correct way