

Ball therapy for Base Narrow Canines

With base narrow or linguoversed mandibular canines (lower canines), the canines erupt more narrowly than they should and push into the roof of the mouth, causing pain and trauma. If left untreated your dog can end up with a hole that goes all the way into the nasal cavity, causing an oronasal fistula.

If there is a pathway for the lower canines to move laterally to a more normal position, **ball therapy can be an easy and effective way to correct the problem.**

Ball Therapy is the use of appropriately sized balls or other firm rubber toys to move the lower canines into a more normal position. The presence of the ball will apply a gentle lateral force on the lower canines and encourage these teeth to tip into proper position as they are erupting. Ball therapy should only be used for the adult canines. If the problem involves the baby teeth they should be extracted.

The ball or toy needs to be firm but able to deform with pressure and should be round or oval. *Chuckit Ultra balls* and *Kong* toys work well. Do not use tennis balls or other toys covered in fuzz, as they will wear the teeth surface.



Use a ball or toy that will just fit between the tips of the lower canines, but not too small that it will sit on the floor of the mouth, and not too large that it will rest on the tips of the teeth (see picture above).

Your dog should play with the toy for **15 minutes three times a day**. To assess the response to treatment your dog should be re-checked in two weeks.

If it is not successful, then there are other options including crown extensions, incline plane, or crown amputation and vital pulpotomy.

