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Home Care Products
Evaluating the Claims
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There are also a variety of gels and rinses available which act as oral antiseptics. The most common active ingredient in these products is chlorhexidine. Chlorhexidine is a non-specific antibacterial agent as well as having some effect on fungus and viruses. There is a large body of research on the efficacy of chlorhexidine as an antimicrobial agent. It acts by causing precipitation of the cytoplasmic contents of the bacterium – a mechanism against which resistance cannot develop. While chlorhexidine has been shown to reduce plaque and gingivitis, it paradoxically can increase the rate of mineralization of plaque (calculus formation). Chlorhexidine also causes a brown staining on the teeth when used as a rinse (can be polished off but looks terrible) and can cause a decrease in the sense of taste. Chlorhexidine is likely best used as a pre-operative oral rinse and at home for the healing period following professional treatment.

MAXI/GUARD[®] Oral Cleansing Gel is available as a gel and as a rinse. Both contain zinc and ascorbic acid (vitamin C). Zinc is antibacterial and important for a healthy epithelium. Vitamin C is important in the production of collagen, which is the main structural protein in gingiva. The gel is tasteless and alcohol free and makes a nice oral anti-septic for the post-operative period. It has also found a use as a plaque retardant in cats that will tolerate no other forms of home-care. The zinc is relatively tasteless, the vitamin C, however, does increase salivation so some cats will froth and foam a bit with *MAXI/GUARD*[®].