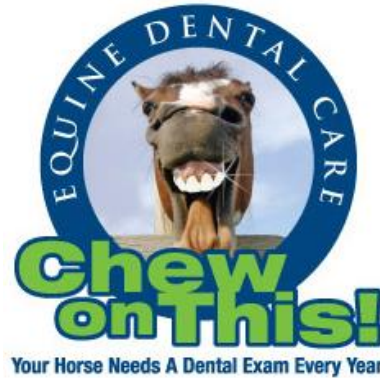




Other Problems:

NO TEETH!

Horses are living much longer than they used to, and it's not uncommon for them to outlive their teeth! Their teeth do not "grow", and therefore eventually they get worn completely away. When this happens, they can not even chew regular grass. They will need pre-chewed feed such as an equine senior feed along with chopped hay or soaked hay cubes.



This brochure was developed in cooperation of the Virginia Association of Equine Practitioners, the Virginia Veterinary Medical Association and the Virginia Horse Council.

Photo credits:
Dr Jennifer LaPlume
Equus magazine (Anatomy)



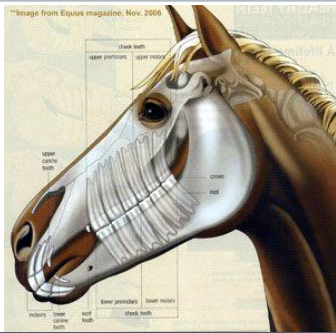
www.VAEP.wildapricot.org
www.VirginiaHorseCouncil.org
www.VVMA.org

Equine Dentistry



roduced by the Virginia
Horse Council Welfare Task
Force





Why do horses need care?

Horses live a long time and they have teeth that keep erupting throughout their life time. This allows them to have a good grinding surface to chew their very fibrous diet. Their teeth wear down at a rate of 2-3 mm/year! This constant eruption and wear is what causes most of their dental problems, as the teeth do not always wear down evenly. This uneven wearing can lead to sharp teeth, broken teeth, periodontal disease and tooth loss. If a horse lives long enough, they can also outlive their teeth! A veterinarian or certified lay dentist should perform annual dental exams on every horse to assess and treat any problems.

Annual exam: A veterinarian or certified dental technician will use a speculum and light along with their hands to examine your horse. If any sharp teeth or other common problems are found, then they will perform Floating (rasping teeth). Sedation may be needed and must be performed by a veterinarian.

Floating can be performed using hand floats, power float or a combination. This will leave the edges smooth and prevent further pain and trauma. Other common abnormalities can be fixed as well such as removing sharp hooks, high teeth and waves (see photo).

Signs of Dental Problems:

- dropping food
- weight loss
- bad mouth odor
- head tilt
- facial swelling
- nasal discharge
- colic or choke

Common Problems: "Equus" 11/2006

