

DENTISTRY



Routine dental care is a vital part of your equines healthcare regime. At Seadown all of our equine vets are happy to undertake routine dental attention out on your yard or at our clinic. This involves performing a full oral examination and then undertaking any remedial work that is required e.g., rasping off sharp enamel points on the cheek teeth or treating periodontal disease.

More advanced dental procedures such as tooth removal or extensive diastema flushing and widening can also be performed at our clinic. Routine dental attention is one of the procedures covered by our zonal visit scheme (see zonal visit fact sheet for further details).

In the past 10 years or so there have been huge advances in equine dentistry, we recognise the vital role that dental care has in giving our horses a long and happy life. We recommend that your equines teeth are checked at least every 12 months, this will often coincide with your horse's annual vaccinations. Sometimes e.g. In elderly horses and ponies or those with conditions such as "parrot mouth" their teeth will require more frequent dental checks.

It is important that the mouth is examined fully using a specialist oral gag, often a small amount of sedation will be used in order to facilitate the full and safe examination of your horse. We will start to check horses teeth from a young age to get them used to the procedure and ensure that they have positive associations with having their mouths examined from a young age. We also have specialist gags for our smaller equine friends and donkeys to ensure that they have a comfortable experience when having their teeth checked.

Our modern dentistry equipment such as battery operated power tools and an oroscope (a camera which allows to look at the chewing surface of the tooth as well as the gum line) enables our vets to treat your horse with the most up to date techniques and to spot problems early on.

Occasionally your horse may require more advanced dental procedures such as diastema widening, tooth removal or filling of cavities/carries that develop within the tooth. All these procedures can be performed by our vets at the hospital or by our visiting orthodontic surgeon.

As well as routine dental checks we can also examine your horse if you think they are showing signs of pain when ridden or when eating.

Signs of oral discomfort are:

- Quidding (dropping food)
- Soft tissue swelling around the jaw
- A foul smelling nasal discharge (usually one sided)
- Swelling in the nasal region
- Reluctance to be bitted
- Not "mouthing up" when ridden
- Resistance developing on one rein/ the horse being one-sided
- Head-shaking
- Weight loss

Please call us at the surgery if you have any further questions regarding equine dentistry and we will be happy to help.



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