

November 2013

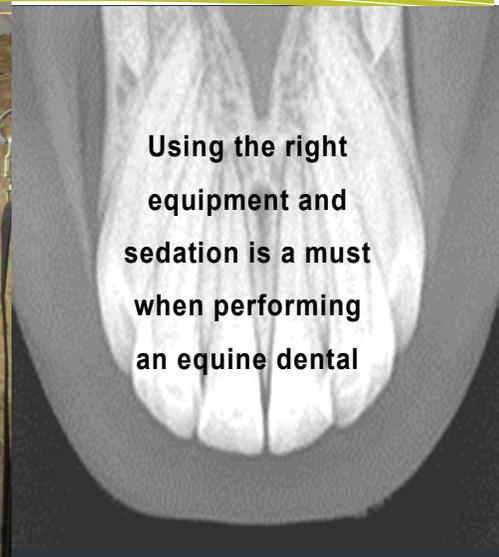
Dr. Matt Schaefer Equine Dentistry

The last week in October I was fortunate to attend a Equine Dental Seminar with Dr. Scott Marx (Advanced Equine Dentistry) & Dr. Travis Henry in Las Vegas, Nevada. It's was a great learning experience to enhance my skills. I am pleased to be able to share these new enhanced skills with you. Some of the new and exciting skills will involve additional equipment, radiology, and evaluation for periodontal disease.

- Dr. Matt Schaefer

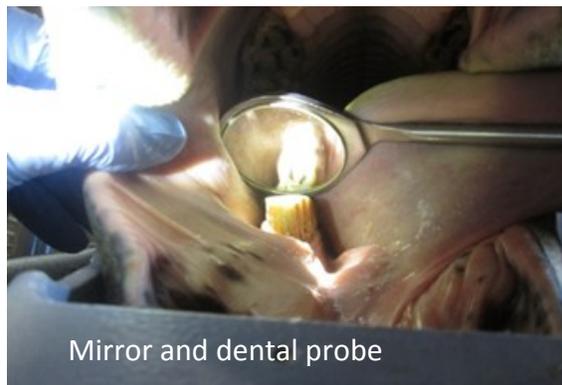


Dr. Matt Schaefer working with a 4th year Vet Student (Katie) from Oklahoma .



Using the right equipment and sedation is a must when performing an equine dental

DENTAL EXAM



Mirror and dental probe



Full mouth speculum and adequate light

The above items along with proper sedation are absolutely essential to get a proper exam.

Just floating the points is ok if nothing else is wrong, but so often much is ignored that will greatly affect the longevity and comfort of your horse.

Things like periodontal status (how well the tooth is attached in the gum line) and endontic status (how viable the tooth is inside) must be assessed and recorded as it may change over time.



Dental Exam—5 Parts

External Exam

Here we look for Temporomandibular joint movement, bony swellings, draining tracts, possible fractures, muscular and facial uniformity, anatomic and developmental changes. Both nostrils are checked for air movement and odor.



Occlusion

The assessment here centers on how well the teeth fit together and function for chewing. Incisor angle and length along with molar table angle and height are checked.

Oral Soft Tissue Exam

In the mouth, the cheeks, tongue and gingiva are checked for abrasions, ulcerations, gingival recession, neoplasia, draining tracts and parasites.

Endodontic Status

Do you know that unlike our teeth, horses can have up to 8 pulp cavities on some teeth? By knowing the signs of pulp exposure, much discomfort to your horse can be avoided.



And yes, horses can have cavities too! They are not exactly like ours but must be staged and evaluated.



Periodontal Status

Many horses examined have feed packing into spaces between and surrounding the teeth leaving a space called a diastema. It is very important to radiograph the tooth surrounded by a pocket that exceeds a certain depth. The gingiva may have receded to a point where it may not come back. The nice thing about equine teeth is that by putting them back into proper occlusion, the surrounding tissue can return to normal and many times the tooth is saved.

