

Lovell Equine Newsletter



American Association of Equine Practitioners

LOVELL EQUINE CLINIC



January 2009

Straight From Your Horse's Mouth

Has your horse ever tossed his head while riding or refused to turn or bend? Does he tilt his head while eating? Has he lost weight lately? Has he been hard to bit or had a foul odor coming from his mouth or nostrils? If he has, the problems could be coming from his mouth and by the time you notice these symptoms, they could be severe.

A yearly dental exam provides the opportunity to identify problems while they are still in the early stage, which decreases the chance that these dental problems can lead to other serious health issues for the horse.

Why is it important for your equine veterinarian to perform dental work on your horse? In the state of Tennessee, it is against the law for a lay dentist to practice dentistry unless he or she is under the direct supervision of a licensed veterinarian. This law is in place to protect you and your horse. A lay dentist is not trained to rec-

ognize a dental condition that may affect the horse's overall health. They are untrained in anesthesia and pharmacology and should never administer sedation. There is no governing board to regulate them and even basic floating irreversibly change's your horses' teeth and should be performed by a veterinarian.

A dental float is routine maintenance of a horse's mouth. This procedure removes sharp enamel points. It also corrects malocclusion and balances the dental arcades while correcting other dental problems.

Today, power floating is used on most dentals. This reduces the amount of physical effort and allows a more complete and efficient dental exam. Your horse will be sedated and a mouth speculum will be placed in the horse's mouth. This reduces stress to the horse, any unnecessary movement, and helps to give a more complete oral exam. The power float can extend the longevity between dental floats. From ages 2-5, your

horse may need dental exams twice each year as there is an extraordinary amount of dental maturation during this period. Wolf teeth and caps may begin to cause biting, eating or training problems. These issues may need to be addressed during this period. Senior horses (ages 20 and above) may also need more frequent check-ups as the risk of periodontal disease rises. At Lovell Equine Clinic, digital radiography is available to diagnose other more serious dental issues that your horse may have.

Preventive medicine is always better for your horse and your budget. Plan to include your dental exam with an annual physical exam once each year. If you would like to have your horse's teeth checked, call us at 615-452-7789 to schedule your appointment. We appreciate being your partner in your horse's health.



NEW IN 2009!

IN ORDER TO BETTER SERVE YOU WE NOW HAVE DIGITAL RADIOGRAPHY AVAILABLE AT LOVELL EQUINE CLINIC.

THIS SYSTEM HAS BETTER QUALITY AND MORE PRECISE PICTURES.

THERE IS NO WAITING FOR PROCESSING AND WE ALSO NOW HAVE THE ABILITY TO E-MAIL PICTURES TO REFERRING VETERINARIANS. THE DIGITAL X-RAY WILL ALSO ALLOW US TO TAKE DIAGNOSTIC IMAGES THE FIRST TIME EVERY TIME. IT ALSO ELIMINATES THE NEED FOR RETAKES AND SECOND TRIPS TO THE FARM TO RESHOOT THE VIEWS THAT WERE MISSED. WE CAN BURN YOU A COPY OF THE X-RAYS TO KEEP ON FILE.