

## Trust Your Horse's Dental Care To a Veterinarian

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Dental care is much more than just floating teeth, and the treatment of many dental conditions requires the management of pain, inflammation and infection. Only a veterinarian may prescribe medications (such as painkillers or antibiotics) or give sedatives to treat dental conditions. If a serious dental issue is discovered, your veterinarian is capable of performing any necessary treatments or surgery to properly address the situation.

In Ohio and Indiana, any layperson who is floating teeth is considered to be practicing veterinary medicine without a license. This is illegal, a violation of the practice act, and jeopardizes the health and welfare of horses.

While some lay-floaters claim professional titles such as "Certified Equine Dentist", they are based on completion of non-sanctioned dental courses, and many lay-floaters have no formal education at all. Therefore, they have no license to revoke, so many continue to practice illegally. Their lack of professional oversight places horses at risk of undiagnosed or misdiagnosed dental conditions, as well as inappropriate treatments.

Veterinarians are licensed, regulated, and insured to practice veterinary medicine under the state laws, veterinary boards, and national organizations. They are also required to regularly fulfill continuing education requirements. Equine dentistry is a rapidly changing field, and the veterinarians at Miamitown Equine attend continuing education conferences every year that include cutting edge dentistry techniques.

Routine examination by a veterinarian will help detect dental disease and other health problems early - before they threaten the well-being of your horse. Veterinarians consider oral care and related issues as part of the overall "big picture" of your horse's health.

***We look forward to  
providing top-notch dental  
care for your horse!***

***Please call 513-715-2600  
to schedule an appointment.***

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## Dental Care For Your Horse

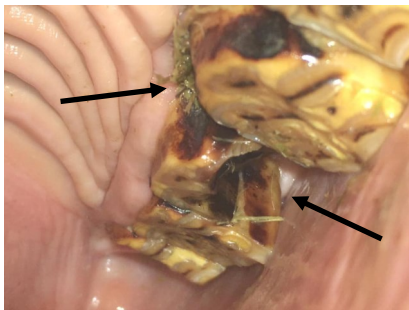
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## The Dental Examination

A quick look inside the horse's mouth may identify a major problem, but it has the potential to miss issues that need to be addressed, especially in the very back of the mouth. For this reason, we recommend a complete assessment that is performed with the use of sedation and a mouth speculum, which holds the mouth open. This allows us to thoroughly inspect every single tooth and the surrounding soft tissues of the oral cavity.

Your horse will be sedated so that they are very relaxed, but they will remain standing throughout the procedure. Sedation ensures that the examination and procedures can be performed in a safe, stress-free manner. It is impossible to do a truly thorough exam without sedation: we need to feel and examine each tooth, inspecting with mirrors, dental picks, and specialized dental cameras where necessary.



**Above:** This is a fractured tooth and associated food packing and gum disease. This issue was discovered on a routine dental exam, and even though this is a painful condition, the horse wasn't showing any outward signs of discomfort. Without a routine exam, it would not have been discovered.

**Below:** Examining with a dental mirror



## How often should my horse get a dental exam?

**Foals:** Brief dental exam at birth and every 6 months until age 2. If any issues noted, a sedated, complete exam is recommended.

**Horses age 2-5:** Sedated, complete dental exam + any needed dental work should be performed every 6 months, since they are transitioning from baby teeth to adult teeth during this time.

**Mature horses:** Sedated, complete dental exam + any needed dental work performed once a year.

**Horses with dental issues and geriatrics:** Sedated, complete dental exam + any needed dental work performed every 6 months..

**Right:** This is an overgrowth called a "hook" that forms when the teeth do not line up correctly, causing uneven wear. This horse is overdue for dental work and the hook is now severe. These and other dental overgrowths are corrected with odontoplasty using precise dental tools.



## Dental Procedures

Dental equilibration, or "floating teeth", includes sharp enamel point reduction and odontoplasty, described below.

**Sharp enamel point reduction:** Since equine teeth continuously grow, they develop sharp edges from the motion of chewing. These sharp points are ground down using a motorized dental float. This tool allows precise, safe smoothing of these points.

**Odontoplasty:** The correction of any dental overgrowths. These abnormalities include various bumps, spikes, unevenness, or overgrown teeth that prevent the horse from chewing smoothly.

**Periodontal Treatment:** If feed material becomes wedged in a space between two teeth or in a diseased gum pocket, the area is cleaned, flushed, and packed with antibiotics.

**Tartar Removal:** Certain horses tend to get tartar buildup. The veterinarian will scrape it away.

**Extractions:** If there are any loose or infected teeth, they can be removed.

**Below:** Before and after sharp enamel point reduction

