



## WILLAMETTE VALLEY EQUINE

*Veterinary Services*

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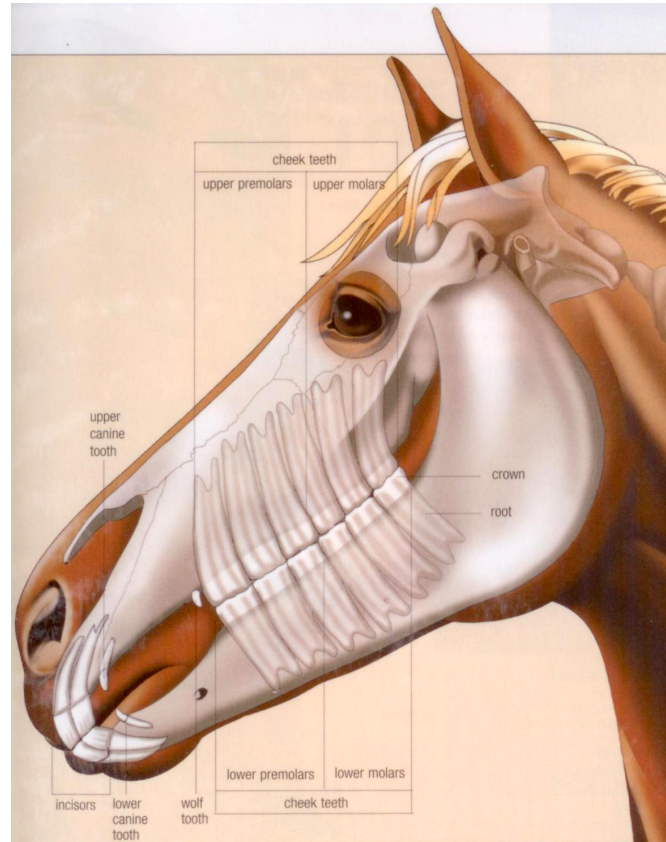
www.WillametteValleyEquine.com

### Equine Dentistry

#### General Information:

With the exception of the canine teeth, all equine teeth erupt continuously throughout a horse's life, emerging as the grinding surfaces wear away. Often the teeth will not wear evenly and can create sharp points or an uneven grinding surface making it hard for the horse to properly chew its food. This is why an equine dental (or float) is needed; your veterinarian can grind away these problem spots allowing your horse to once again chew its food normally. All adult horses have between 36 and 44 teeth: 12 incisors, 12 premolars, and 12 molars. Canine and wolf teeth may also be present.

*Canine teeth* are the small sharp teeth between the incisors and molars. Male horses normally have four permanent canine teeth that erupt between ages four and six. Less than 28% of female horses have canine teeth; typically only one or two partially erupted. Canine teeth do not continually grow so they do not require floating but they may be reduced and smoothed if they interfere with the tongue or eating.



*Wolf teeth* are the very small first premolars found in 13-32% of all horses regardless of gender. The potential of wolf teeth to interfere with the bit or cause the horse pain has been widely debated. While sharp, loose, or malformed wolf teeth cause discomfort, a normal healthy tooth will likely present no problem. Nonetheless, removing wolf teeth, which erupt before age one, is fairly routine in performance horses.

#### After Care Instructions:

- If your horse was sedated for their dental do not allow them to eat for at least one hour as their likelihood of choking is increased.
- After they wake up from sedation you may feed as per their normal routine.
- It is not unusual for horses to be sore for 2-3 days after a dental, if they are significantly uncomfortable you may give Bute or Banamine for up to 2 days. If they are sore for more than 3 days call your veterinarian as he or she may need to re-examine your horse's mouth.
- If your horse is dropping feed or has difficulty chewing after the dental call your veterinarian for a re-evaluation.
- If wolf teeth were extracted during the dental do not place a bit in your horse's mouth for at least 3 days, otherwise, your horse may be ridden the following day as usual.
- If you have any further questions or concerns call your veterinarian at 503-678-4225.

*Sources:*

Equus. "Healthy Teeth, Healthy Horse." November 2006, pp 31-32.



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### Equine Dentistry

#### Common Dental Abnormalities:

