



Veterinary Health Center

AT KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY

Dental work in horses:

Routine dental care is essential for high quality horse care. A horse's mouth should be examined at least once a year (during vaccination) to identify problems or potential problems. The problems can range from resisting bits to losing feed and thus weight.

Horses' teeth are very dynamic. Like humans, horses have two sets of teeth: deciduous teeth (baby teeth) until 5 years old, and permanent teeth (adult teeth). Horses' permanent teeth grow throughout their life. The only way the teeth stay a certain length is by the wear of chewing and grinding the teeth together when they eat.

Some common problems seen with horses include sharp points possibly causing lacerations or ulcers in the mouth, retained deciduous teeth, hooks/ramps, loose teeth, fractured teeth, misalignment, wolf teeth (causing problems while riding), and gum disease. All of these problems can change your horse's behavior and/or eating patterns. Over time dental problems could cause weight loss, choke and colic.

At Kansas State University Veterinary Health Center we can thoroughly examine the mouth and use a powerfloat for occlusal equilibration in the clinic stocks. Your horse will thank you, and your feed will be better utilized.

