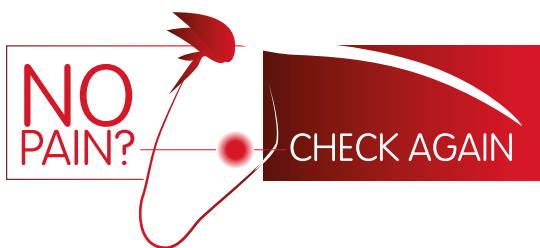


Dental Awareness Pack

- Signs of dental problems – what could your horse be hiding?
- The importance of routine dental care.
- What to expect from your horse's dental check.
- Watch our 'Moment of Tooth' webinar



For more information visit

bhs.org.uk/teeth



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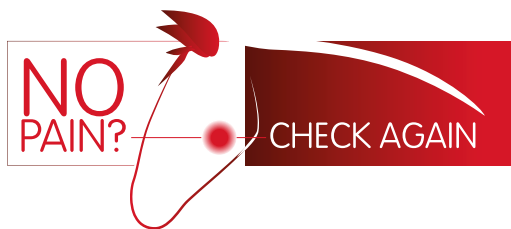
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Horses are stoic animals, meaning they can endure pain for long periods of time without showing signs, especially with pain related to teeth.

The painful truth

Research has found that **up to 70% of horses** have undiagnosed dental disorders, which could unintentionally mean many horses are suffering in silence.



No Pain? Check Again aims to raise awareness on the importance of routine dental checks a minimum of once a year to help identify problems early and avoid more complicated issues in the future.



Remember to download the No Pain? Check Again guide at bhs.org.uk/teeth

Every year we help **6,300** horses through proactive advice, support and education.

With your support we are able to continue our vital work protecting and promoting equine interests.

Help us to make a difference to their future.

Donate today

Our partnership with the Equine Dental Clinic

Dr Chris Pearce & Dr Nicole du Toit are directors of the Equine Dental Clinic, the largest specialist referral veterinary practice dedicated to equine dentistry in the world.

To find out more visit:
equinedentalclinic.co.uk



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Equine Dental Clinic



Watch the video on You Tube [here](#)

The 'Moment of Tooth' Webinar

FREE WEBINAR

With special guests

Directors of the Equine Dental Clinic & Specialists in Equine Veterinary Dentistry Dr Chris Pearce & Dr Nicole du Toit

Hosted by

The BHS Horse Care & Welfare Team

Join us online as we discuss:

- How do you know if your horse's teeth are healthy?
- Signs of dental problems – what could your horse be hiding?
- The importance of routine dental care
- What to expect from your horse's dental check
- Real life case studies from Dr Chris Pearce and Dr Nicole du Toit

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Watch our free 'Moment of Tooth' webinar today

What to expect from your horse's dental check

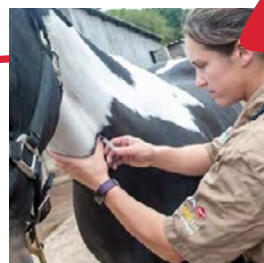
It is best if your horse is stabled and relaxed for a dental visit. If stabling is not available, find a quiet sheltered area in the field where your horse can be kept in a safe space, without their companions gaining access. Don't give a feed before the visit. The vet or Equine Dental Technician (EDT) will need water; preferably warm in the winter.

The routine for the procedure is as follows:



1

Your vet/EDT will ask some questions including age, history, and if there are any problems with ridden performance or changes in behaviour. All details will be logged for record purposes.



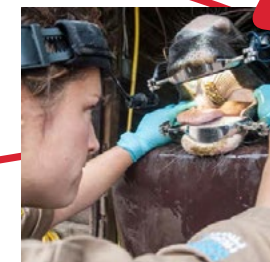
2

Sedation may be given. Just like with humans, dental checks are not always comfortable, especially if pain is present. If your horse requires sedation, the intravenous injection can legally only be administered by a vet.



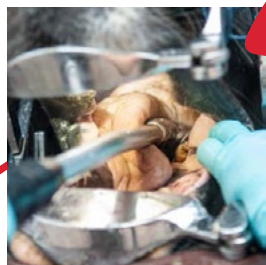
3

The whole horse is checked, followed by a close inspection of the head, incisors and soft tissues.



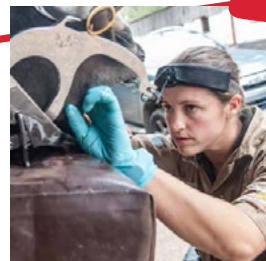
4

A mouth speculum ('gag') is placed to keep the horse's mouth open and is then washed out thoroughly. The head may be placed on a head-stand.



6

Treatment of sharp points, any overgrowths and general uneven wear is performed using either hand rasps or motorised instruments. Special training is always required for motorised instruments.



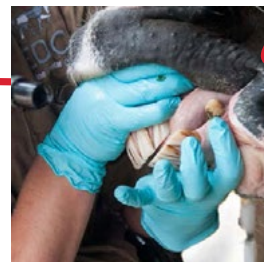
5

A thorough examination is carried out – looking with a bright head light, feeling all the structures and recording the findings. A dental mirror will be used to see every angle. Dental picks and probes are also used to check for gaps, cavities, and other diseases.



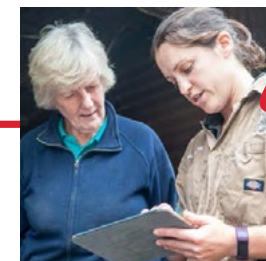
7

The mouth is rinsed and re-examined; further rasping may be needed to make sure nothing has been missed.



8

The incisors are checked again, ensuring good contact between the teeth.



9

Recommendations for follow-up are discussed with the owner or carer.

Did You Know?

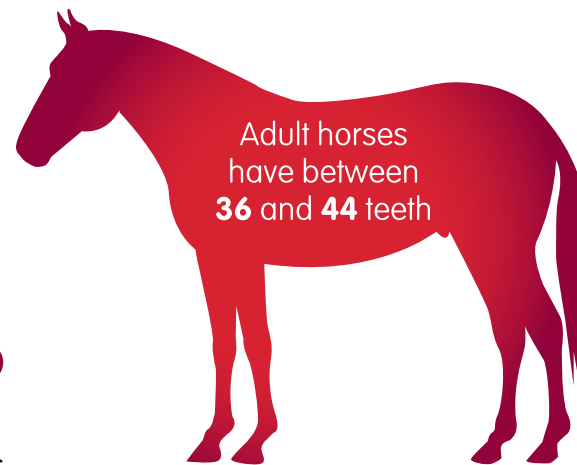
Facts - share your favourites and help us to raise awareness and spread the word!



Horses' teeth **constantly erupt (grow)** throughout their lifetime, they are born with very long tooth roots that get gradually smaller as they get older.



70% of horses have undiagnosed dental problems.



Adult horses have between **36 and 44** teeth

(females have **36-40**, males have **40-44**).

30,000

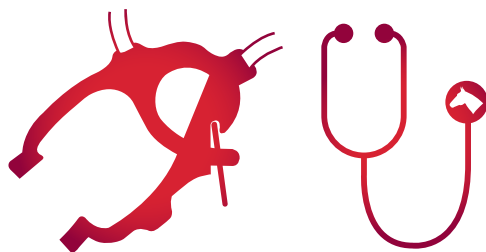


CHEWS A DAY

Horses have evolved to chew grasses and forage for over 16 hours a day, equalling around **30,000 chews a day!**



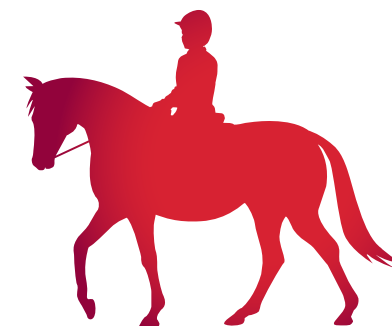
Horses' teeth naturally wear away approximately **2-3mm every year** from chewing and grinding.



There are **only 2 professionals** qualified to check your horses' teeth- an equine vet and Equine Dental Technician registered to either the British Association of Equine Dental Technicians (BAEDT) or category 2 members of the Worldwide Association of Equine Dentists (WWAED).



Older horses can struggle to grind down certain foods. **Dental checks every 6-12 months** and a carefully managed diet with softer foods will help them to stay comfortable and eating efficiently.



Pain related to dental disorders are likely to contribute to poor performance in horses and can be easily overlooked.

Ask The Experts – FAQs

Industry experts, Dr Chris Pearce and Dr Nicole du Toit have the answers to some frequently asked questions.

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At what age should I first get my horse's teeth checked?

A dental check any time from 18 months to 2 years of age is essential before any type of groundwork is started.

How do I care for an older horse's teeth?

Older horses require more regular routine dental checks, usually every 6 months. Older horses' teeth become less efficient at grinding, and they can develop large overgrowths. Some older horses benefit from supplemental feeding with hay pellets, grass pellets or other soft fibre feeds.

What are 'Wolf teeth' and how do I manage these if my horse has them?

Wolf teeth are small pre-molars that are not functional and sit just in front of the first cheek tooth of the upper jaw, or occasionally the lower jaw. They may interfere with the bit during exercise, so are often extracted when found in young horses. If your horse has wolf teeth and you are concerned contact your vet for support.

Can regular dental treatment reduce the risk of colic?

Severe dental disease that impacts your horse's ability to chew and grind down their food may lead to a blockage (impaction colic) or other digestive upsets. Regular dental treatment may be beneficial in reducing the risk of colic.

Can dental issues be linked directly to poor performance?

Painful dental conditions may make the horse generally uncomfortable and interfere with exercise especially when the horse has a bit in their mouth.

Why might my horse be sedated to check their teeth?

Sedation helps to make the horse more relaxed and in particular helps the tongue to relax. This allows the dental practitioner to thoroughly examine your horse's mouth safely with less risk to your horse, the handler or themselves.

Why might my horse not show any signs that they have a dental problem?

Horses are stoic animals and will not always show signs of pain. Horses with dental pain will also choose to chew on the non-painful side of their mouth meaning issues can go unnoticed as the horse is still able to eat and maintain their normal weight.

How can I best look after my horse's teeth and prevent dental issues?

6–12 monthly dental checks and rasping by a suitably qualified dental practitioner (vet or BAEDT / category 2 WWAED dental technician) is essential to ensure early detection of dental disease and ensure comfort from normal sharp points.



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Want to know more?

For practical information about dental health and the importance of regular dental checks, explore the BHS website – full of practical guidance and resources to use and share!

Resources include:

- Signs of dental problems
- The benefits of regular dental checks
- Who should examine my horse's teeth?
- At what age should I start getting my horse's teeth checked?
- What happens at the dental visits?



Remember to download
the No Pain? Check Again
guide at bhs.org.uk/teeth



Thank you for your support and remember...
No Pain? Check Again



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For more information visit
bhs.org.uk/teeth