

# SPRING 2020

## News & Updates from Miller & Associates

### "Dedicated Service, Superior Care"

Keeping you safe is our priority. Here's how our COVID-19 Healthy Practice Procedures will affect your horse's appointment:

- If you are healthy with no signs of illness, we ask that you please practice social distancing, leaving at least 6-10ft between our doctors and yourself.
- If you are ill or have traveled to any restricted area, please do not attend your horse's appointment.

[Read our full policy.](#)



Newly added to our website for your convenience:

[Online Appointment Request](#)

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[Online Health Certificate Request](#)

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[Online Statement of Health/Flu Rhino Statement Request](#)

## Featured Newsletter Article: Your Horse's Annual Dental Exam

DEVITA WOOTEN, DVM

Dental care has become a standard component of every horse's routine preventative care program. Just like in people, maintaining good oral health in your horse is essential for their overall health and longevity. [Click here to read the full article.](#)



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## Your Horse's Annual Dental Exam

Dental care has become a standard component of every horse's routine preventative care program.

Just like in people, maintaining good oral health in your horse is essential for their overall health and longevity. Thanks to advancements in equipment, techniques and overall knowledge pertaining to equine dentistry, veterinarians have made huge strides in improving dental care for horses. The primary goal of routine dental care is prevention of abnormalities and early detection of dental problems. When discussing equine dental care, the first thought is often of floating the teeth. But truly, the first step in caring for a horse's mouth begins with a thorough oral exam. There are 5 major components to a complete oral exam. First, the exam begins with evaluation of the external structures of the face - looking for things like swellings, swollen lymph nodes or nasal discharge. The second part of the exam is the evaluation of the soft tissue structures within the mouth - like the tongue, mucosa and palate. The third part of the exam is the assessment of occlusion or the areas of the tooth that come into contact with the opposing tooth. For example, an abnormal occlusion, or a malocclusion, would be a parrot mouth or an over bite. The final parts of the oral exam entail evaluation of the periodontal (structures around the tooth) status and endodontic (internal tooth structures) status. Once the mouth is fully evaluated an appropriate plan specific to the individual needs of the horse can be made. Often after an oral exam, a dental float will be performed to correct abnormalities of the tooth surface. To perform the float, power and hand tools are used to make corrections to the teeth. A speculum is used to safely open the mouth and allow visualization and access. Most commonly sharp enamel points and small hooks that form from normal wear of the teeth are seen on exam. These points and hooks can cause painful ulcerations on the cheeks and tongue if not addressed. If there are more serious abnormalities found on oral exam, diagnostic tools like radiography (x-ray) and endoscopy are used for a more in-depth evaluation. Most horses, young and old, require a routine oral exam and float every 6-12 months. If a horse is exhibiting concerning signs of dental disease - like dropping feed, weight loss, difficulty eating, nasal discharge, smelly breath, etc. - a veterinarian should evaluate them right away to address any problems. Proper dental care for your horse is vital to their comfort and well-being.

  
Young horse  
with a severe  
overbite



  
Radiograph of a  
horse with a  
missing cheek  
tooth and severe  
wave mouth

### Article written by Dr. Devita Wooten

Dr. Wooten hails from sunny California. She graduated from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, with a degree in Biology and minor in Chemistry. She then attended veterinary school at the University of California, Davis, and graduated in 2011. From there, she completed a one year internship and then stayed on as an associate veterinarian at Pacific Crest Equine. Dr. Wooten joined Miller and Associates in 2016. With her, she brings her experience in advanced dentistry, wellness and preventative care, emergency care and reproduction.

