

# **CHURCHFIELD VETS DENTAL CLINICS** **MONDAYS**

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**AT THE EQUINE CENTRE  
HOYLANDSWAINE**

## **Equine Dentistry**

The horse's teeth are important to its general health and condition and should be checked regularly. The most routine dental procedure for horses is reducing sharp points which are mostly found on the edge of the upper molar and premolars and the inner edge of the lower molars and premolars. They occur to a greater or lesser extent in every horse due to the grinding action of the teeth when chewing hard feed and roughage. These points can be very sharp and can cause ulceration of the inner cheeks and tongue, obviously causing pain and discomfort. This may also lead to problems with accepting the bit, with eating and foraging for food, may affect movement of the jaws and also turning when ridden, together with the horse losing weight and condition.



All our vets at Churchfields are equipped with dental equipment to be able to examine your horse's mouth and provide routine dental care on the yard or at the centre. We also have power tools for those dental cases which have large spikes and overgrowths especially of the front premolars and back molars which then require more extensive work to be done.

At our practice we perform advanced dental techniques only permitted by vets such as wolf teeth extraction, other tooth extractions, diastema widening and dental radiography. Sedation is often required for routine equine dentistry; it allows a more thorough examination of a horse's mouth, so that abnormalities can be detected early.

Horses with tooth problems may show abnormal behaviour or signs such as:

- Eating food slowly
- Quidding i.e. dropping half chewed food on the ground
- Drinking less due to tooth sensitivity to cold water
- Drooling excessively
- Swellings on upper or lower face
- Halitosis (bad breath) which signals dental decay, or decaying food particles caught between teeth.
- Sores on lips or gums
- Weight loss
- Aggressive shaking of hay before eating it
- Soaking own hay in water bucket
- Head shaking when eating
- Head shaking or different head carriage when ridden

All horses should have regular checkups at least once a year often combined with annual vaccinations, and some horses require a checkup twice a year, especially older horses or horses with particular problems, so as to prevent further deterioration of the teeth.