



American Association of Equine Practitioners
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Letter to the New York Times Editor:

Re “When a Horse Has a Toothache, Specialized Dentists Step In” (Aug. 27, 2025)

Modern equine dentistry is widely considered a branch of veterinary medicine. Non-veterinarians who perform equine dental procedures without veterinary oversight or access to appropriate medications may inadvertently compromise the health and welfare of the horses they are attempting to treat.

Dentistry in horses encompasses periodontal treatments, extractions, endodontic therapy, restoration of fractured teeth and advanced diagnostic imaging including radiographs to assess teeth and associated structures such as the sinuses.

The standard of care for modern equine dentistry also involves the administration of prescription medications that are only available from a licensed veterinarian, including those for pain management and sedation to ensure the horse experiences minimal discomfort and stress during and after the procedure. Antibiotics may be required following certain procedures.

While some states have loosened regulations to allow non-veterinarians to perform equine dental procedures, the American Association of Equine Practitioners urges horse owners to choose a licensed equine veterinarian to perform medical procedures on their animals.

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