



Animal Dental Care

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SMALL ANIMAL DENTISTRY: FIFTY KEY QUESTIONS

Introduction

1. What is veterinary dentistry and what are its goals?

- veterinary dentistry is a vital and growing field in veterinary medicine that includes periodontics, endodontics, restorative dentistry, orthodontics, oral medicine, and oral surgery
- veterinarians have done dental extractions from as early as the 1800's
- over the past several decades, veterinary dentistry has begun evolving into the delivery of more advanced diagnostics, treatment, and prevention for better quality patient care

- periodontics includes professional dental cleaning and assessment as well as periodontal surgeries ranging from root planing to gingival flap procedures to guided tissue regeneration procedures to help preserve teeth

- endodontics includes preserving living teeth that have pulpal exposure with vital pulp therapy, also eliminating dental pain
- endodontics involves root canal procedures to remove dead and dying pulp tissue from diseased teeth, and sealing their canals so they are preserved as functional, non-vital, pain-free teeth

- restorative dentistry includes preparing and placing artificial crowns on teeth that are either vital or non-vital, in order to restore function and to add strength to help prevent crown fracture

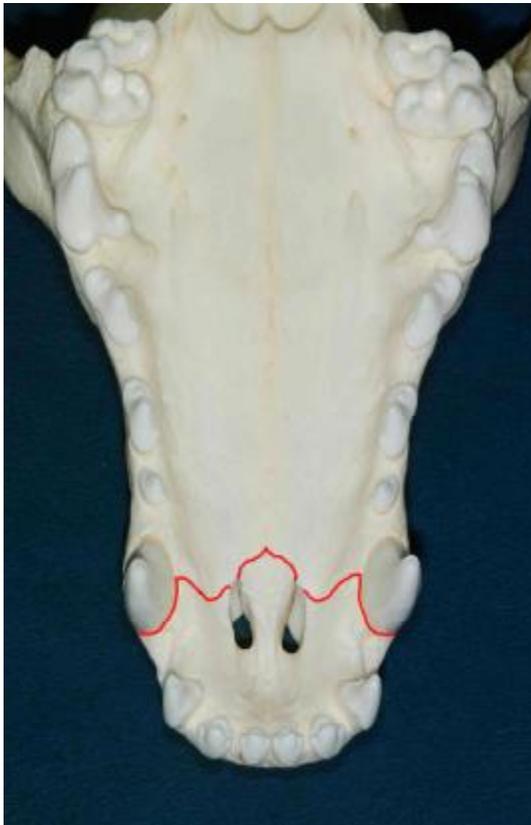
- orthodontics includes interceptive extraction of deciduous teeth to help prevent malocclusion of permanent teeth, or the movement of permanent teeth to help correct painful malocclusions
- oral medicine includes diagnosis and treatment of local and systemic oral diseases such as the treatment of oral neoplasia with radiation therapy
- oral surgery includes such procedures as dental extractions, oronasal fistula repair, palatal defect repair, maxillary and mandibular fracture repair, and oral tumor resection
- the goals of veterinary dentistry, as with all areas in veterinary medicine, are to alleviate pain and suffering, to improve the quality of life, and to increase longevity for animals
- veterinary dentistry became recognized as a boarded specialty by the American Veterinary Medical Association in 1988
- with continuous evolution of the specialty, the misconception is being dispelled that it is limited to just treating teeth

Module 1

Oral and Dental Anatomy and Nomenclature

2. What are the clinically important structures of the oral cavity for dogs and cats?

- the clinically important structures are the bones of the oral cavity, the temporomandibular joints, the blood supply and innervation, the muscles of mastication, the tongue, the salivary glands, the dentition, and the periodontium
- the incisive, maxillary, and palatine bones form the roof of the mouth
- the upper incisors are contained in the incisive bone comprising the premaxilla, while the rest of the upper dentition is contained in the maxilla



Canine maxilla showing the incisive bone rostral to the red line.