

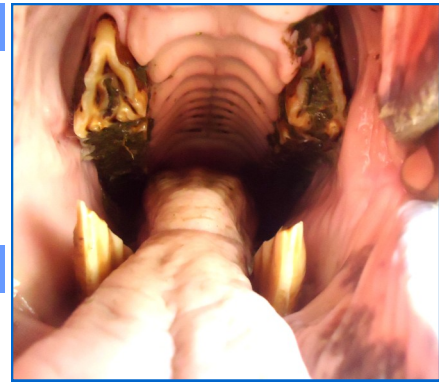
Common dental problems in working equids in India – A review of 54 cases

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Introduction

Dental problems in equids are common and mostly neglected due to lack of knowledge and resources in developing countries. Dental abnormalities lead to severe pain and may cause significant systemic disorders. A thorough clinical examination using a full mouth speculum is a pre-requisite to performing any dental procedures.



Objective

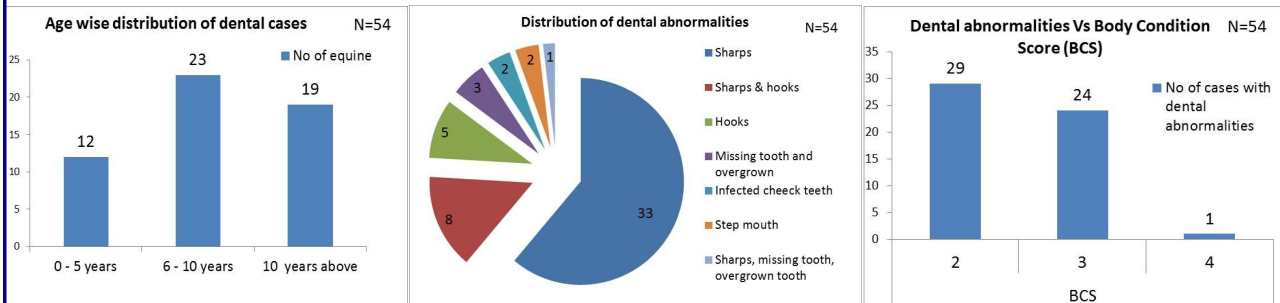
To identify the most common dental problems of working equids in India and investigate relationships with animal-level factors.

Materials and Methods

Records for 54 clinical cases of dental problems seen in equine fairs in India during 2012 were reviewed for dental abnormalities, symptoms, age and body condition score (BCS). Cases were split into three age groups: young (0-5 years), middle (6-10 years) and old (11 years plus).

Results

Mean age of cases was 9.8 years. More cases were noted in the middle age group (23) than old (19) or young equines (12). Observed cases by sex was equal (27 each male and female). Problems recorded were dental sharps (33), hooks (5), sharps and hooks (8), missing and overgrowth (3), infected cheek tooth (2), step mouth (2) and combination (1). Most common signs and symptoms were halitosis and quidding (17), no prominent signs (13), recurrent colic, grain in faeces and diarrhoea (12), inappetence (9), sinusitis (3). Body condition score (BCS) recorded was 2 (29), 3 (24) and 4 (1).



Discussion

Mean age in this study was slightly lower than reported literature. The common finding of enamel sharps and hooks concurs with other studies. Tendency for low BCS is in agreement with some previous reports, however few reports describe associations between dental problems and age groups. Similar signs of quidding, halitosis and recurrent colic were reported previously.

Conclusion

The present study indicates that although halitosis and quidding may help in identification of dental disease, some animals may show no prominent signs of dental problem. Therefore a dental examination in working equids is needed to ensure that problems are identified and addressed even with limited resources.

References

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