

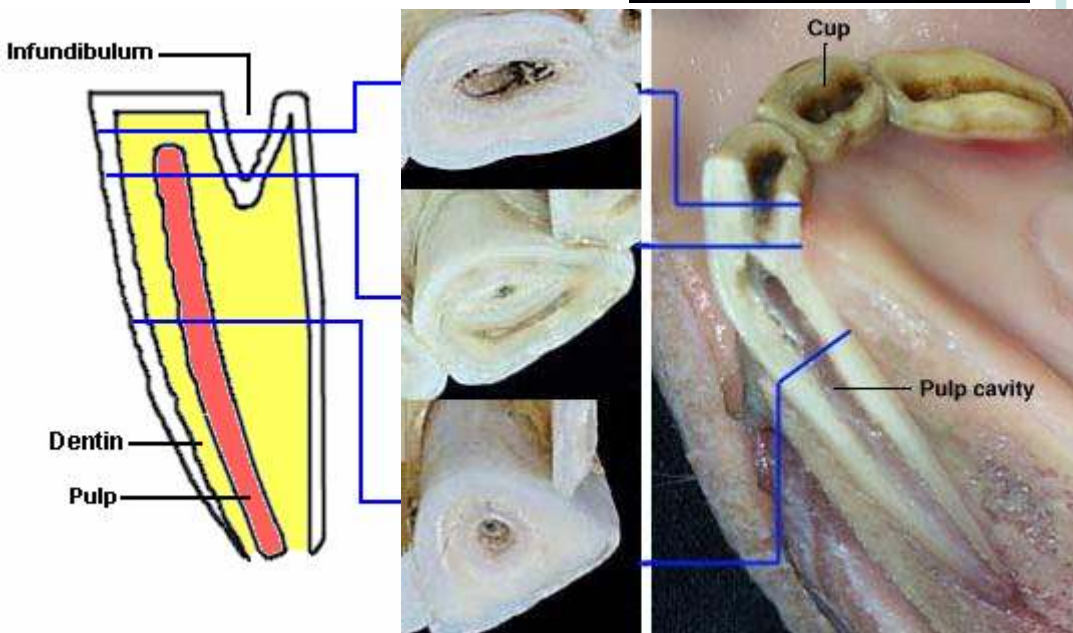
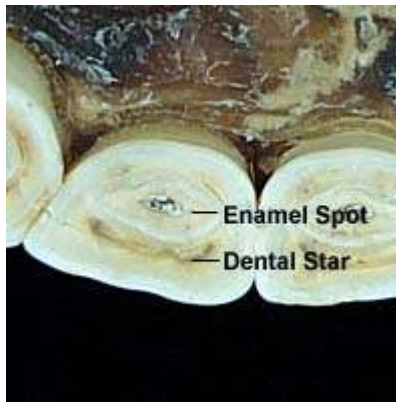


## Aging Horses by Their Teeth

Estimating the age of a horse by examining its teeth is a common practice. For very young horses, eruption dates are useful, but in general, the place to start is examination of the occlusal surface of the lower incisors. Similar changes occur on the upper incisors, but it is typically easier to get a good look at the lowers. Two characteristics should be noted:

**Shape of the incisors:** For horses less than about 11 years, all of the lower incisors have a rounded, oval shape. As the horse gets older, the surface of the incisors changes, first to a triangular shape and finally a rectangular shape.

**Cups, stars and spots:** The *cup* is the center of the infundibulum. Wear of the occlusal surface causes the cup to get smaller and eventually disappear from all lower incisors at about 8 years of age leaving the *enamel spot* in its place. The enamel spot is the deepest part of the infundibulum. The *dental star* corresponds with the pulp cavity and appears at 8 years of age in the first incisor. It appears as a line and then changes to a large, round spot as the occlusal surface is worn further. It is still visible after the cup and enamel spot have been worn away.



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“Riding a horse is not a gentle hobby, to be picked up and laid down like a game of Solitaire. It is a grand passion. It seizes a person whole and, once it has done so, he will have to accept that his life will be radically changed.”  
- Ralph Waldo Emerson

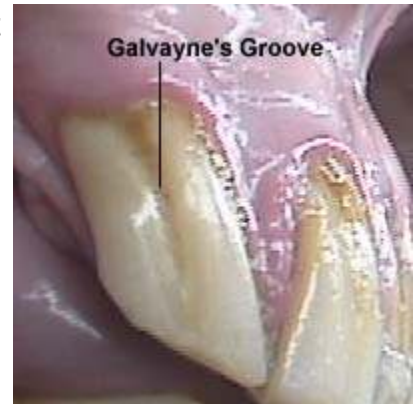




## Aging, cont

The anatomic relationships between incisor anatomy and the cups and stars seen on the occlusal surface as they wear are depicted in the images and diagrams immediately above. The image on the right is shows an incisor of a young horse cut longitudinally while still in the jaw.

Another dental feature useful for aging older horses is **Galvayne's groove**. As shown in the image to the right, Galvayne's groove is located on the lateral surface of the upper third incisor. It appears first near the gum line at about 10 years of age. The groove extends halfway down the tooth at 15 years, and all the way down the tooth by 20 years. By approximately 25 years, Galvayne's groove is halfway gone, and by 30 years, it has disappeared completely.



### Tooth Eruption

	<b>Temporary</b>	<b>Permanent</b>
<b>Incisors</b>	d <sub>1</sub> = 6 days	I <sub>1</sub> = 2.5-3 years
	d <sub>2</sub> = 6 weeks	I <sub>2</sub> = 3.5-4 years
	d <sub>3</sub> = 6 months	I <sub>3</sub> = 4.5-5 years

**Canines** 4-5 year

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### Wear of Permanent Teeth

	<b>I<sub>1</sub></b>	<b>I<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>I<sub>3</sub></b>
<b>Smooth (cups gone)</b>	6 years	7 years	8 years
<b>Stars</b>	8 years	9 years	10 years
<b>Round</b>	9 years	10 years	11 years
<b>Triangular</b>	16 years	17 years	17-18 years
<b>Rectangular</b>	18-20+ years		

Author: Melissa Rouge, Colorado State Reprinted with permission

### *Words of wisdom from Tom Dorrance 1910-2003*

- *Be as gentle as possible and as firm as necessary.*
- *The slower you do it the quicker you'll find it.*
- *Do less to get more.*
- *Take the time it takes.*





## **The Coggins Test**

**by Charles J. Issel, DVM, PhD**

**My horse was turned away from a horse show because we didn't have a current Negative Coggins test. Is it really that important?**

To answer the question directly, you were turned away because it is customary to monitor the serum of horses for antibodies to equine infectious anemia virus (EIAV)—and we use testing to prevent the movement of virus carriers and spread of the infection caused by the lentivirus (a virus that can cause slowly progressive, often fatal animal diseases).

The Coggins test is the most commonly used means of finding antibody to EIAV, which causes a persistent infection in horses. There also are three rapid ELISA tests for EIA. ELISA test results can be obtained within an hour. A Coggins test result requires at least 24 hours. Testing for EIA has been done for more than 25 years to identify virus carriers and to regulate their movement. There are no treatments or vaccines for this lentivirus relative of HIV in humans. (For more information on EIA, see [The Horse of August 1999](#).) Since there is no cure for the infection, currently the only options for control of the spread of the infection are permanent quarantine of test-positive horses, or euthanasia.

The potential for spreading EIA is highest at congregation points like horse shows, when horses are in close contact. Transmission is generally effected by transfer of blood between horses through the interrupted feeding of insects, e.g., horse flies. To stop the spread of the infection and disease, one must know the status of each individual and control movement of test-positive animals. The highest-risk scenario is a congregation point (such as a horse show, trail ride, or other competition) that does not require a negative test for EIA.

Actually, a negative test result for EIA is only accurate the day the blood is taken. If our horse is test-negative and all its contacts have been, are, and will be test-negative (as are all their contacts), we can rest assured that our horse will remain test-negative. Therein lies the rub. Testing 100% of our contacts is virtually impossible.

In Utah, infections with EIA have been found in fetal, free-roaming horses. Routine testing for EIA of domesticated horses at risk has not occurred in that area historically. When domestic and wild horses intermingle, there is a risk of EIA infection either being introduced by the domesticated horses into the wild population, or the other way around. Most likely both circumstances could occur.

The greatest risk of acquiring EIA today in the United States is from the “untested reservoir” population. While some states have annual testing, no one has been successful in testing 100% of the horses in their jurisdiction. To test every equid would allow us to eradicate EIA from the population. Each state has its own set of regulations to monitor EIA. In some areas, testing has been done on a regular basis over a long period of time, with very few positive cases found in recent years. This is the case in the northeast, for example, from Maine to Maryland, where an average of two horses out of nearly 200,000 tested each year has been positive. Evidence of a negative test for EIA is required to move a horse on a public road in the state of New York—regulations such as these have thwarted the spread of the infection and disease.

I recommend that all horses considered for purchase have evidence of a recent negative test for EIA. If there are questions about the status of all the previous contacts of the horse, we recommend the sale be contingent on a second negative test about 45 days after the transfer.

One idea to help increase testing for and awareness of EIA is for the states to grant a “reward” to owners who remove test-positives from their herds.

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This was originally posted on [www.myhorsematters.com](http://www.myhorsematters.com)

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### O.C.E.A.N.S.

(Obsessive Compulsive Equine Attachment Neurosis Syndrome)

Obsessive Compulsive Equine Attachment Neurosis Syndrome (O.C.E.A.N.S) is most frequently – although not exclusively – diagnosed in the female, and can manifest itself anytime from birth to extreme old age. Symptoms may appear any time and may even go dormant in the late teens, only to re-emerge in later years. A fairly typical case would initially show the syndrome in its active form for about ten years, beginning some time in mid to late childhood. Dormancy often then occurs for a varying length of time, with the syndrome reoccurring at a later date, at which time it generally become a chronic, life-long condition.

Symptoms vary widely in both type and degree of severity. However, certain key points may be used to enable family members to make an accurate diagnosis.

#### *The afflicted individual:*

- 1 Can smell moldy hay at ten paces, but can't tell whether milk has gone bad until it turns chunky.
- 2 Finds the occasional "Buck and Fart" session hugely entertaining when performed by a horse, but severely chastises her husband for similar antics.
- 3 Will spend hours cleaning and conditioning her tack, but wants to eat on paper plates so there is no washing.
- 4 Considers equine gaseous exhaust to be fragrant.
- 5 Enjoys mucking out four stables twice a day, but denies that the kitchen floor needs cleaning more frequently than once a month.
- 6 Will spend an hour combing and trimming an equine mane, but wears a hat so she doesn't waste time brushing her own hair.
- 7 Will dig through manure piles daily looking for worms, but has no intention of going fishing.
- 8 Twice a week will spend an hour scrubbing buckets and troughs, but has a problem cleaning the bath and the toilet bowl.
- 9 Will not hesitate to administer a rectal exam up to her shoulder, but finds cleaning out the Thanksgiving turkey cavity for dressing quite repulsive.
- 10 Can sit through a four-hour session of a ground work clinic, but is unable to make it through a half-hour episode of COPS.
- 11 By memory can mix 8 different supplements in the correct proportions, but can't make mac and cheese from a box.

*How this affects the spouse of an afflicted victim,,,,,next issue*