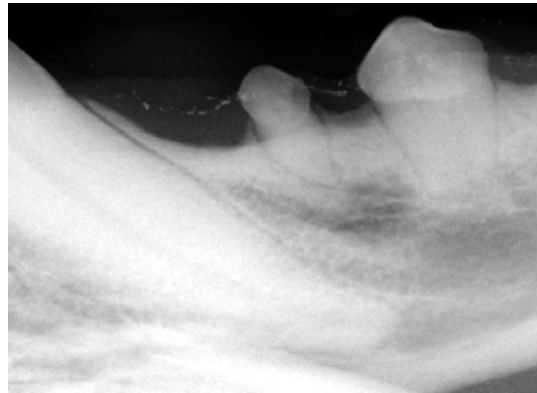


**Cage-Biter Syndrome**



Distal abrasion of the canine tooth.



Radiograph are taken of the affected canine tooth prior to treatment.



Abrasion is the gradual wearing away of the surface of a tooth due to an external source. In humans, aggressive tooth brushing is a common cause of dental abrasion. In dogs, one of the most common causes of dental abrasion is cage-biter syndrome or distal abrasion of the canine teeth. The syndrome is usually seen in dogs that are crated and have anxiety disorders. Some chew toys and bite sleeve for working dogs can cause a similar appearance of the teeth. The canine teeth are mostly affected by this syndrome, but the incisors are frequently affected as well. Early recognition of this problem is very important.

The abrasion can severely weaken the teeth leading to sensitivity, pulpitis, pulp exposure, and fractures. Treatment for this condition consists behavioral training, avoiding kennels or crates, metal crown therapy or composite restoration. Composite restorations will quickly fail if the dog continues being a cage biter. Even with a metal crown restoration, an aggressive cage biter can loosen the crown or wear through the metal. Metal crowns are highly recommended for working dogs that depend on their canine teeth like military or police dogs. Radiographs are taken before treatment to better access the endodontic health of the tooth. When placed properly, metal crowns rarely loosen and are an effective treatment for cage biters.