



BLOAT - DILATATION VOLVULUS

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Bloat (dilatation) followed by stomach rotation (stomach torsion) is a life threatening condition. Partial or complete rotation prevents food from entering or leaving the stomach. The abdomen swells. The affected dog may drool, retch, wander restlessly, become listless, or show signs of pain. Shock quickly develops.

Bloat is an acute condition with a high fatality rate even for dogs that receive immediate medical attention. **Early diagnosis and swift surgical intervention, combined with aggressive medical therapy, increases the chances of survival. This condition, however, is as serious as it gets.**

DIAGNOSIS - X-rays will confirm the diagnosis. An affected dog may be just uncomfortable or in advanced life threatening shock. Reducing pressure inside the stomach is vital. If a tube cannot be passed down the esophagus your vet will insert a large-diameter needle through the abdominal wall directly into the stomach

TREATMENT - Emergency therapy with fluids, corticosteroids, antibiotics, drugs to control related heart arrhythmias, and drugs to limit the release of large quantities of tissue-damaging free radicals starts immediately. At the same time, surgery is used to rotate the stomach back and to secure it down into its normal position.

PREVENTION - If you have a dog that is known to be at risk of bloat (see description at bottom), you can take steps to prevent the problem. Limit water consumption for an hour before or after each meal. Do not allow the dog to drain

the bowl of its contents: water should be consumed in moderate quantities. Do not allow rolling or other exercise after meals. Dividing food into small meals has not been shown to reduce the risk of further bloating.

BREEDS AT RISK

The risk of bloat runs in families. Middle-sized, large, or giant breeds with deep, narrow chests are most at risk from this condition.

Breeds at risk of bloat include:

- Doberman Pinscher
- Gordon Setter (above)
- Great Dane (top)
- Irish Setter
- Irish Wolfhound
- Standard Poodle
- Weimaraner