



Gastric Dilatation-Volvulus (GDV) AKA Bloat

Gastric Dilatation-Volvulus (GDV) or bloat, is a life threatening emergency. It is more common in large breed, deep-chested dogs, but can happen to any dog, any time. Bloating occurs when a dog's stomach fills with air, food and/or fluid. If the stomach "flips" over, the openings out of the stomach get closed off and the air is trapped. This is called torsion. When torsion happens there is a rapid distension of the stomach and the dog is very distressed. They may try to vomit unsuccessfully or retch, drool, pant, pace, and be unable to lay down comfortably. In some cases, they collapse, go into shock and die if not treated immediately. This is a true life and death situation. There is no time to wait and watch - action must be taken. Emergency surgery is almost always needed to relieve the air and flip the stomach back over.

The following suggestions can reduce the risk of bloat:

1. Feed your dog 2-3 smaller meals a day, rather than 1 big meal.
2. Schedule feeding times when someone will be home to monitor the dog's behavior after eating.
3. Do not allow vigorous exercise shortly after eating.
4. Do not allow excessive drinking after a meal.
5. Elevate the food bowl so your dog bends down less when eating.
(This is believed to help prevent swallowing of air.)
6. Know what signs to look for and *take immediate action*.