

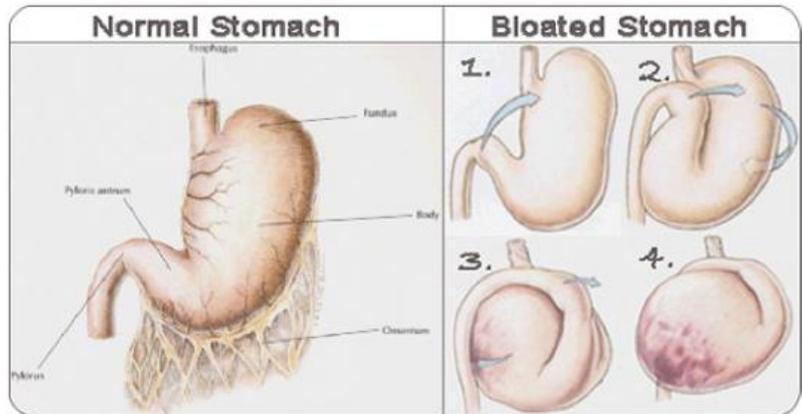


What You Need to Know About Bloat

Bloat, Gastric Dilatation Volvulus (GDV), is a very serious and life threatening condition that needs to be addressed immediately. This article will go over what GDV is, how to recognize it, how to fix it, and compare it to food bloat.

What is a Gastric Dilatation Volvulus?

- For one reason or another the stomach (*Gastric*) becomes dilated (*Dilatation*) with gas, usually from digesting food, and flips over (*volvulus*) in the abdomen.
- Once flipped the gas becomes trapped in the stomach and continues to build-up causing the characteristic distended abdomen.



Signs & Symptoms:

- Anxious, pacing, and painful behavior
- Stretching
- Drooling
- Unproductive retching
- Distended abdomen
- Increased heart rate, respiration rate, and weak pulses
- Pale gums (blood supply and oxygenation is compromised)

http://www.northshorespecialist.com.au/serv_surg_GDV.html

Diagnosis:

- An x-ray taken with the dog on its side is taken – looking for large amount of air in the stomach
- The vet will also “ping” the side of the abdomen – it sounds like a *basketball* when tapped

Physiologic changes that occur due to the increase in pressure in the abdomen from gas build-up:

- Decrease in blood return to heart
- Decrease in blood flow to tissue of stomach and surrounding organs
- If it builds up enough without being relieved the stomach can rupture
- Increase of pressure on diaphragm, which decrease the efficiency of the lungs

Treatment

- The above changes create a state of *shock* for the patient which has to be corrected before surgery
 - Fluid bolus to stabilize blood pressure
 - Pain meds
 - Oxygen therapy
 - If distended too much the stomach will need to be ‘trocharized’
 - Needle is placed directly into abdomen to relieve pressure



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- This will not fix the bloat because it is still flipped, it is merely a method to relieve the gas that has already accumulated
- Do not attempt to do this on your own
- Once stable **emergency surgery** will be done to open the abdominal cavity to fix the flip
 - Stomach is flipped back into proper position
 - Surrounding organs and tissue are checked to make sure they are still viable
 - The spleen is often effected and may need to be removed
 - The stomach is tacked to the abdominal wall to prevent future flips (**gastropexy**)
 - **Note:** if you have a breed predisposed to GDV some vets can do a **gastropexy as a preventative measure**. They are often done during spays and neuters

Factors that may be involved with GDVs:

- **Large breeds:** Great Danes, Standard Poodles, St. Bernards, German Shepherds, Weimaraners, etc
- **Deep chested breeds:** can't leave out Labs, Spaniels, Pointers, and Hounds
- Dogs **fed one large meal** daily
 - Prevention: feed 2-3 meals per day
- Dogs that **eat very fast** and **don't chew** kibble
 - Prevention: buy slow-feeder bowls, pre-moisten kibble, or feed off a cookie sheet
- **High activity after eating** or drinking large amounts
 - What at least 30 minutes, an hour is better, before letting the dog do lots of exercise
- **Genetics** – unfortunately genetics has been shown to play a role sometimes

What is Food Bloat?

- Dog eats a large amount of food so that abdomen becomes distended
- This can be a very uncomfortable condition and animal will act sick and painful
 - **Productive vomiting**, groaning, and lethargy are a few signs
- **An x-ray will help determine if it's a food bloat or gas bloat**
- If the stomach is packed full enough with food it can still cut off blood supply to stomach causing severe damage (Emergency)
- Not all food bloats are emergencies but if the animal is acting painful your vet can make him/her vomit to empty the stomach of its food overload

Key Take-Away Notes

- ✓ **Gastric Dilatation Volvulus** is an **EMERGENCY**. This cannot wait until your vet opens up in the morning.....please seek out the nearest emergency vet if your regular vet is not available
- ✓ The sooner you can seek medical help the better chance your dog has of recovering

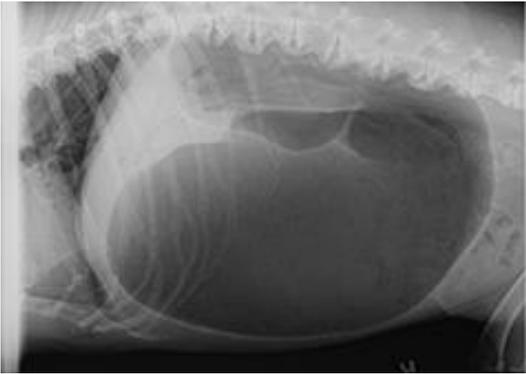


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More info at: <https://www.acvs.org/small-animal/gastric-dilatation-volvulus>

This is an x-ray of what gas in the stomach looks like....GDV

<https://www.acvs.org/small-animal/gastric-dilatation-volvulus>



VS.

This is an x-ray of what a normal abdomen should look like

(<http://www.apcofparker.com/radiology/#.Vd1eQvIViko>)

