

**PREVENTING CANINE BLOAT**

- Feed small amounts of food 2 – 3 times a day
- Do not let the dog exercise one hour before and two hours after eating.
- Do not let the dog drink large amounts of water after eating
- Add an enzyme product to food
- Keep simethicone (eg. Gas-X) on hand to treat gas symptoms
- Know the phone number and directions to emergency clinics in your area should the need arise
- Consider preventative gastropexy
- Discuss bloat and bloat surgery with your vet before it is needed. Many vets do not routinely perform this surgery and will instead refer you to an emergency clinic. If your vet does not perform bloat surgery precious minutes can be lost.

Bloat is deadly, don't hesitate to go to the vet with a dog that is showing any symptoms. It is a matter life and death.

Enter your local Emergency Vet information here.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Directions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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Hours of operation: \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Preferred 24 hours so that you do not have to move your pet in the morning after bloat surgery.**

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**MAGDRL**

MID-ATLANTIC  
GREAT DANE  
RESCUE LEAGUE,  
INC.

**CANINE  
BLOAT**



## CANINE BLOAT – WHAT IS IT? HOW TO RECOGNIZE IT!

Canine bloat is a serious medical condition of dogs. It is more properly termed gastric dialation-volvulus complex, as this describes the course of events. Almost every breed of dog has been affected by GVD, but the condition is seen more commonly in large, deep-chested breeds, such as the Great Dane. The exact cause of GVD has not been determined with any certainty. Dogs that eat rapidly and then are allowed to exercise afterward may be at increased risk. Apparently the heavy, food-filled stomach can act like a pendulum, swinging back and forth until it twists on itself.

Composition of the diet thus far, does not seem to be a factor, nor does it seem to matter whether the dog eats dry or canned food. Major studies are being done at this time to try and determine causes of this condition.

Whatever the inciting cause, affected dogs all show similar signs. Initially they are anxious, restless, not interested in food or water; they may vomit once or twice and then follow this with retching and gagging motions, which are usually unproductive. After 30-60 minutes the dog

begins to appear swollen in its midsection due to the accumulation of gas in the stomach. The dog will begin to pant heavily and breathing becomes rapid and shallow.

In most cases of GVD, the stomach undergoes a volvulus or “twist”. This closes both the esophagus and pylorus, preventing the dog from relieving the gas pressure. The condition is rapidly fatal, causing shock, coma and death within a very short time. Diagnosis is relatively easy based on breed, history and clinical signs. Your veterinarian may take x-rays to confirm the diagnosis. BVD is a true life-threatening emergency. If you suspect your dog may be showing signs, take your dog to your vet or emergency clinic without delay.

Treatment is aimed at reducing the gas pressure and returning the stomach to its normal position. Your vet will remove pressure via a stomach tube or trochar through the stomach wall. They will then prepare the dog for exploratory surgery to find the exact problem and correct it. Usually the surgeon will perform a gastropexy at this time to prevent recurrence.

Death loss due to GVD is very high for several reasons. Often the owner delays in presenting the dog because they are unaware of the seriousness of the condition. Also, once the stomach has undergone volvulus, many metabolic poisons build up in the body resulting in damage to the heart muscle, stomach wall, liver and spleen. Frequently these poisons will cause the heart to stop during the surgery or they may circulate for

several days post-operatively and continue to pose a threat.

Many veterinarians suggest that a preventative gastropexy be done. A circumcostal gastropexy – considered to be the most effective – involves taking a section of the stomach wall, guiding it around one of the ribs, and reattaching it to the stomach wall. This prevents the stomach from twisting. This surgery can be done in conjunction with a spay.

### 20 Symptoms of Bloat

- (1) distended abdomen
- (2) rigid (hard) abdomen
- (3) painful when touched in the abdomen
- (4) vomiting foamy or liquid material
- (5) unproductive attempts at vomiting or retching
- (6) arched back
- (7) praying position (down in front, rear standing)
- (8) laying down on belly - crouched position
- (9) curling up in a ball
- (10) laying or sitting in an unusual location
- (11) seeking a hiding place
- (12) looking at their side
- (13) frequent swallowing (aerophagia)
- (14) hypersalivation (drooling heavily)
- (15) drinking excessively
- (16) lack of appetite
- (17) quiet, any abnormal behavior
- (18) lethargy, weakness
- (19) panting, breathing rapidly or heavily
- (20) red gums, or white gums (not normal pink color)