

BLOAT (from Healthwatch)

BLOAT kills many dogs each year, PLEASE, PLEASE read the following and PAY ATTENTION!

BLOAT is a condition where the stomach rapidly expands while it fills with gas and water. Many times it is accompanied by TORSION where the stomach twists over on itself and the ends actually are twisted shut – so nothing can get in or out. The condition is an emergency, if not treated immediately it ALWAYS results in an agonizing death.

No one knows what causes BLOAT, it generally BUT NOT ALWAYS, begins an hour or so after eating. Eating an overly large amount, and/or vigorous exercise before or after eating can contribute to the condition.

Symptoms MAY be some or all of the following: Distressed or in-pain attitude, Hard abdomen, Enlarged abdomen, Vomiting, Trying to vomit or defecate w/no success, Continually looking at stomach area, Pacing, Pale gums, Pleading look (telling you something is wrong and asking you to fix it). If you even suspect B LOAT, get your dog to a vet immediately! It is better to pay an emergency visit fee and be wrong than wait and consign your dog to an excruciating death.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO TRY AND AVOID BLOAT?

1. DO NOT feed one meal a day; feed at least twice a day (less food in the stomach at one time is easier to digest).
2. DO NOT feed dry kibble, ALWAYS serve kibble in warm water so the dog doesn't gulp down lots of water after eating dry kibble. At the Friends For Pets kennel they add a heaping dollop of plain yogurt to each meal to cut gas build-up.
3. DO NOT allow your dog to exercise or play vigorously for at least an hour after eating.
4. TRY to keep an eye on your dog before and after it eats (it's not always possible, but try).
5. DO NOT let your dog spend its evening and/or sleep in the backyard, the garage, or a room too far away for you to hear any distress. We can't always be with our dogs but how awful if you were close enough to save your dog's life, but too far away to hear its agonizing death.
6. KNOW your Vet's hours and phone #, plus KNOW where to get Emergency Vet Service 24 hours a day. It's too late when you're in a panic.
7. If the Vet doesn't think it is BLOAT, because you got there in the early stages, INSIST on an x-ray to make sure – AGAIN, better to spend a few dollars & be wrong than let your pet die a preventable death.
8. ALWAYS HAVE ENOUGH GAS IN YOUR CAR'S TANK TO GET TO THE Vet, BLOAT coupled with TORSION kills – every minute counts.

NOTE: While any dog can BLOAT, it is more common in large deep-chested breeds, which include Goldens, Labs, German Shorthaired Pointers, Vizslas, Pointers, etc. Weimaraners which are in the top 5 of breeds susceptible to Bloat. Also, dogs 7 years and older are twice as likely to Bloat as dogs 2 – 4 years old!