

Pet Safety: Gastric Dilatation-Volvulus, Otherwise known as Bloat

Bloat can be deadly. Is your dog at risk?

Gastric Dilatation-Volvulus (GDV), commonly known as “bloat” in dogs, is a very serious and dangerous health condition. Bloat occurs when a dog’s stomach becomes abnormally enlarged or distended.

Stomach torsion is the abnormal positioning of the stomach which is caused by the stomach’s rotation about its axis, i.e. twisting of the stomach. Bloat usually leads to torsion, although torsion can occur without bloat. Chronic gastric volvulus (ongoing mild torsion) may not cause typical signs of GDV, but should be suspected in dogs with intermittent vomiting, weight loss, mild bloating, rumbling sounds in the bowel (borborygmi) and/or belching.



Facts about bloat:

- Dogs weighing more than 99 pounds have an approximate 20 percent risk of bloat.
- In a study done by the Purdue University Research Group, headed by Dr. Lawrence T. Glickman, the Great Dane was the number one breed at risk for bloat.
- In 1993, a statistical study involving 134 dogs with gastric dilation and volvulus was conducted by the School of Veterinary Medicine in Hanover, Germany. In this study, 66.4 percent of the bloated dogs were male and 33.6 percent were female.
- Most dogs with bloat are between the ages of 7 and 12 years old.
- When combined with the complications of GDV, bloat is a leading cause of death to dogs, second only to cancer. While the exact cause of bloat is still unknown, some evidence suggests a familial association.
- A risk factor associated with death following surgery for bloat is when the dog has exhibited clinical signs of bloating for greater than six hours before seeing a veterinarian.

Information provided by [The Veterinary Information Network](#).