

Gastric Dilatation-Volvulus - GDV

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Life-threatening, GDV is an emergency that requires immediate veterinary assistance for proper diagnosis and treatment. Also known as *Bloat*, or *Torsion*, GDV can quickly take the life of your dog.

Commonly seen in deep-chested breeds (Basset Hounds, Doberman Pinschers, Great Danes, etc.), is caused by an intake of gasses that aren't released, through eating quickly, gulping water, and/or strenuous exercise after a meal.

Gasses trapped in the stomach expand, causing a distention (*bloat*) of the stomach, which is readily visible from the appearance of the dog. The distention of the stomach causes it to rotate, possibly a full 360 degrees.

Symptoms:

- Restlessness
- Distended abdomen
- Glassy eyes
- Unproductive retching
- Excessive panting
- Salivating
- Arrhythmia
- Pale gums and mucous membranes

Treatment:

Immediate veterinary assistance is needed to prevent fatality. Surgically releasing the gasses, the dog may need to undergo extensive surgical therapy to re-turn the stomach to its original position as well as treatment of shock symptoms.

Even after surgery, many dogs do not recover, and die of complications stemming from Gastric Dilatation-Volvulus. Ongoing therapy is often needed.

Prevention:

It is recommended that smaller meals, broken up over the day are fed, and exercise avoided immediately after eating. Limiting water after exercise to avoid gulping is also a needed precaution. Owners of deep-chested breeds that have a history of GDV may consider have the stomach stapled to abdominal muscles to prevent future Torsion. This preventative step should only be taken under the advisory of one or more veterinarians.