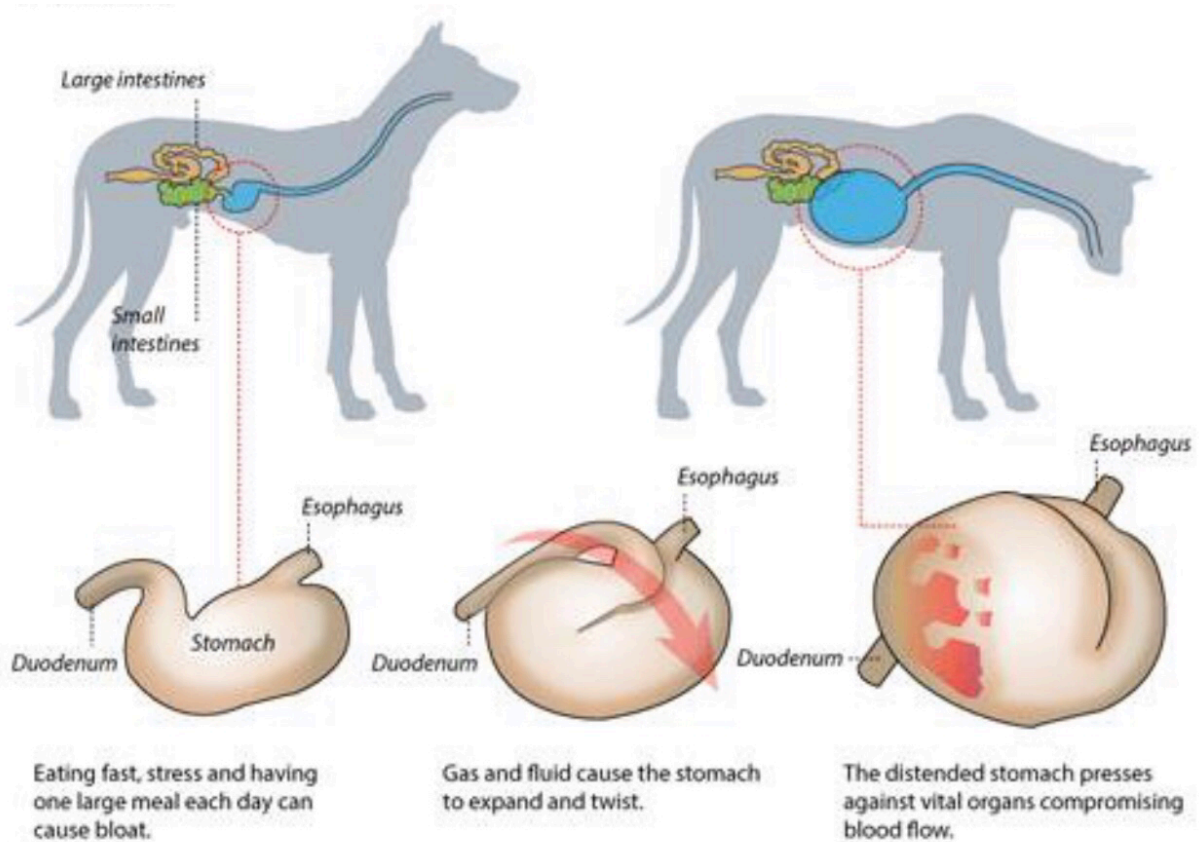


BLOAT – What is it?

Bloat or GDV (Gastric Dilation-Volvulus) is a rapidly progressive, life threatening condition and is most commonly seen in large, deep-chested dogs. Initially, the stomach fills with gas, fluid or food. Then the stomach can twist, cutting off the blood supply and putting pressure on other organs.



What are the symptoms?

- Distended and hardened abdomen - Anxious and restless - Stands with legs stretched out in front and behind (Like a rocking horse) - Attempts unsuccessfully to belch or vomit.
- Increased drooling - Heart rate increases.
- Weakness and pale gums - Shortness of breath.

Initial Treatment

- A scan or X-ray will likely be performed in order to confirm the diagnosis.
- Your vet may try to release the excess gas with a tube, but this may not be possible if the stomach has twisted.
- Surgery may be needed to untwist the gut and relieve pressure on other organs.

How do I help prevent bloat in my dog?

The causes of bloat are not fully understood, but the following may help.

- Feed little and often (never less than 1 meal/day).
- Avoid strenuous exercise 1 to 2 hours, before or after feeding.
- Try to avoid rapid eating. (A slow feeding bowl may be of help).
- Stress can increase the risk of bloating.

It is of vital importance, if you suspect bloat, that you get your dog to the vet immediately for treatment. Minutes can make a difference to your dog's chances of survival.