

### **Gastric Torsion - A.K.A....Bloat!**

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Whatever you feed your dog, be aware that gastric torsion, or bloat, is a serious problem in German Shepherds. Bloat is a swelling of the stomach caused by a build-up of liquid and gases that cannot be expelled naturally. This swelling can be further complicated by an accompanying torsion, or twisting, of the stomach.

Theories abound as to why bloat occurs. Among these are: too much swelling of dry food once ingested; exercise within an hour after eating; drinking excess water after a meal; laxity in the ligaments holding the stomach; or all of the above. Recommendations for prevention include soaking dry food thoroughly before feeding and not allowing your Shepherd to drink water or exercise until an hour after it has eaten. Digestive enzymes have also been suggested as a possible aid against bloat.

Symptoms include depression; drooling, restlessness, failed attempts to vomit and a swollen abdomen. If you suspect that your dog has bloat, take him to a vet immediately. This one is a killer.