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From: lissa.scott [lissa.scott@verizon.net]
Sent: Sunday, September 02, 2007 2:21 PM
To: 'Extmagdrl@yahoo.com'
Subject: DOE Topic # 41: Emergency Bloat Care

Hi All,

I spent the morning surfing the web for new research on Gastric Dilatation-Volvulus (GDV or bloat/torsion) and came across the article below. Sorry for the clinical language, but it provides a good description of the symptoms, how GDV impacts the blood supply to the heart and other organs, and post surgical concerns. Sharing the article plus a critical suggestion as Dog Owner Education Topic #41: Emergency Bloat Care.

We recommend that if a Dane appears to be bloating, immediately get them to the nearest Veterinary Emergency Hospital (VEH.) However, reading this article reminded me that the closest place may not be a good choice. My closest VEH is 10 minutes away in Glen Dale, MD, but it has a rotating staff and is only open nights/weekends. By 7 am each morning, owners of animals needing round-the-clock care must transport their dogs to their own vet, then back to this VEH for the night. After dealing with this madness in 2000 during 4 days of our dog's non-stop grand mal epileptic seizures, I decided never to use this hospital again.

Since then, I make a 25 minute mad dash to a full-service, 24 hour VEH in Annapolis, MD. Using this facility with their resident surgical staff, and around-the-clock monitoring and aftercare is why my Danes Merlot and Jupiter both survived torsion. This VEH looks just like the intensive care ward you'd see in any human hospital – lucky for us because anecdotal evidence points to failures in monitoring and aftercare as key factors in the post-surgical death of 20-25% of dogs that have GDV surgery.

****Please consider this now before an emergency arises.**** If your closest VEH does not provide the aftercare services cited below or if they do not provide them around-the-clock, I urge you now to find your nearest full-service 24/7 VEH. If you don't know which VEHs are nearby, you may find one here: <http://www.vetlocator.com/hotline.php?gclid=CNr9k4CnpY4CFQdbHgodox-iRQ> but please confirm in advance that they offer 24-hour monitoring and care.

The Emergency GDV Care article is here <http://www.northkinganimalclinic.com/pdf/Norkus-Review-Mar05VT1.pdf> and below is an excerpt on critical post-operative GDV support:

“The main postoperative concerns in patients with GDV include residual shock, cardiac arrhythmia, surgical complications, pain management, gastritis, and electrolyte abnormalities. Intensive 24-hour monitoring is a necessity. Consider referring patients to a nearby facility if your practice cannot offer such care. Ongoing care should include intravenous fluids at or above maintenance levels, depending on the patient's individual needs. BP should be continuously monitored and maintained with a mean arterial pressure above 60 mm Hg. An ECG should be checked frequently (i.e., every 2 to 6 hours), or a continuous ECG should be established for the first 3 days. Arrhythmia occurrence is high. Patients that do not initially present with arrhythmia may often develop ECG disturbances 12 to 36 hours after surgery. Gastritis and esophagitis also put these animals at risk for developing aspiration pneumonia during recovery. Patients should be observed for fever, dyspnea, tachypnea, and crackles or wheezes during thoracic auscultation.”

As always, thanks for educating yourself to protect your Danes, and to help all dogs and their owners!

Lissa Scott
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Mid-Atlantic Great Dane Rescue League

MAGDRL web: <http://www.magdrl.org>

MAGDRL events: <http://www.lissa.net/Joya/MAGDRL.htm>

Bloat info: http://www.lissa.net/Joya/Merlot_bloat.htm

Gastropexy info: <http://www.lissa.net/Joya/Lapro-Pexy.htm>

"A dog is the only thing on earth that loves you more than he loves himself." - Josh Billings

