



HEALTH ISSUE: Bloat or gastric dilation-volvulus (GDV)

DESCRIPTION: Bloat affects mainly large breeds and the Alaskan Malamute is affected by this life threatening condition. It involves the stomach filling with gases causing dilation of the stomach. The resulting pressure on the ends of the stomach then prevent the gases from escaping and in extreme cases this causes the stomach to twist, cutting off entry and exit and can lead to death.

Bloat is incredibly painful and life threatening for the dog. Many dogs die from this condition so it is very important for owners to be aware of the symptoms and causes.

Malamutes are prone to this illness due to the deep, narrow chest. It is thought that feeding a large meal of dry food once a day increases the chance of bloat developing, so it is considered safer to feed malamute's smaller meals twice a day or more. Malamutes should not be heavily exercised an hour before meals or two hours after meals to lessen the risk of bloat.

When the stomach is distended, a vet will insert a tube down the throat into the stomach to allow gases to be released. If the stomach has twisted it may be necessary to insert a needle through the stomach wall and a general anaesthetic is administered to allow the vet access to untwist the gut.

Bloat is life threatening. If you think your Malamute may be developing bloat, get him to the vet immediately!

Dogs who have had bloat are at a higher risk of developing the condition again.

SYMPTOMS: Dogs suffering from this condition are unable to swallow, belch or vomit, and as the stomach distends from the increasing gases the dog will start to drool, often pace up and down and be unable to settle, and be in a visible state of discomfort. Often, as the gases increase, the stomach may feel very large and hard and make a noise like a drum when tapped.

KNOWN TESTING: None

CURRENT RESEARCH: None



Alaskan Malamute Rescue is run by the Alaskan Malamute Club of the UK