



ABOUT THE DISEASE

All of the blood flowing to the intestines originates from a common blood supply called the mesenteric root or mesenteric blood supply. A **mesenteric torsion** is a rapid and often fatal disease where the intestines spin around the mesenteric root cutting off all blood supply causing intestinal death and sepsis (blood poisoning).

Large breed dogs are the most prone to this condition, especially German Shepherds and Pointers.

Symptoms include:

- Abdominal pain
- Vomiting, sometimes with blood
- Abdominal distention
- High volume bloody diarrhea

OBTAINING A DIAGNOSIS

Physical examination is suggestive, but the preferred choice for diagnosis is abdominal x-rays (radiographs).

Other diagnostic tests to help establish patient stability include blood pressures, blood work, and abdominal ultrasound.

Ultimately, confirmation is made at the time of surgery.

TREATMENT

Rapid movement to surgery is the only outcome that increases success. However, most patients succumb to this condition as it is caught far too late for surgery to make a difference.

Pre-surgically, patients are treated for shock and sepsis in an attempt to stabilize for surgical intervention.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Do not hesitate; have the patient evaluated if they show rapid decline.
- This is a life-threatening emergency.
- Prognosis is grave without immediate surgery.