



## FOOD BLOAT

### ABOUT THE DISEASE

As a normal part of digestion, when patients eat a kibbled diet, the food will often expand once mixed with water and digestive liquids. Typically occurring in puppies who are overfed, or gain uncontrolled access to food, the stomach can over-distend causing a **food bloat**.

Symptoms are typically fast to appear, usually after eating too much kibble. Patients will develop abdominal pain and may vomit or display unsuccessful attempts to vomit. Abdomen may also appear visibly distended. These symptoms can appear similar to other more significant gastrointestinal disease processes (such as gastric dilatation and volvulus or “GDV”), so it is important to have patients evaluated by a veterinarian when these symptoms occur.

### OBTAINING A DIAGNOSIS

A patient history and physical examination will often suggest the presence of a **food bloat**, but x-ray (radiograph) can confirm.

Some patients may have a blood pressure checked to assess stability.

### TREATMENT

**Food bloat** can be difficult to treat and often requires waiting for the body to take a natural course of digestion. If safe to do so, veterinarians may recommend not feeding your patient additional meals for 24 hours to allow the body time to process what has been ingested.

Sometimes, vomiting can be induced to attempt to remove stomach contents, however, it is not always successful and should not be attempted at home prior to veterinary evaluation.

Some patients are hospitalized and placed on intravenous (IV) fluids to help combat dehydration while the body shifts a large amount of fluid into the gut to aid in digestion. Additional medications may be given supportively to aid in digestion and help relieve pain/discomfort.

Rarely will patients require surgery to remove the kibbled food contents. In patients showing signs of instability or mechanical obstruction, immediate removal of the food may be necessary.

### TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Feed multiple small meals per day instead of one large meal.
- Pre-moisten kibbled food while patients are young to help reduce in-stomach expansion.
- Prevent uncontrolled access to food by placing it in a sealed plastic container or behind a latched pantry door.