

GASTROPEXY: PREVENTING DILATATION-VOLVULUS



Gastropexy is a preventative surgery in which the stomach is permanently attached to the right side of the abdomen. This is done to prevent a serious life-threatening condition called Gastric Dilatation and Volvulus (GDV).

GDV occurs when the stomach fills up with either food or gas (also termed "bloat") and then rotates on itself, cutting off blood supply. This results in poor blood flow, which can lead to death of tissue (including the stomach wall and

spleen). Significant heart arrhythmias are also associated with this condition.

Dogs commonly present with non-productive vomiting, lethargy, and a large rounded abdomen.

GDV can occur in any breed, but is more common in large or giant breeds with a deep chest. Breeds we commonly see with this condition include Great

Danes, Weimaraners, Poodles, Setter breeds, and St. Bernards, but it can occur in any breed.

The preventative surgery can be performed at any time, but is commonly done at the time we spay or neuter the dog. If the dog is female, the spay incision

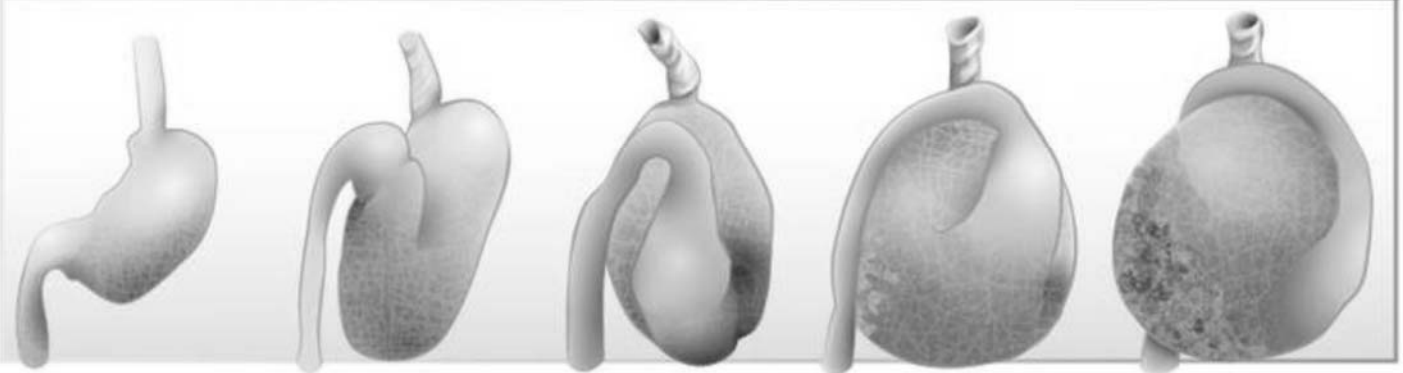
can be elongated to allow access to the stomach, so there is still only one incision that is simply a bit

longer. With male dogs, a second incision, as access to the stomach is far forward from the incision made for neutering.

Sutures are placed through the outside of the stomach wall into the wall of the abdomen after making superficial cuts in both organs, creating scar tissue that fuses the stomach to the abdominal wall. This prevents the life-threatening volvulus (twist) in this condition.



Stomach Developing Bloat



Normally positioned stomach

The esophagus begins to twist and the pylorus begins to point upwards.

The stomach twists and the pylorus moves to the opposite side. Air is trapped in the stomach and the stomach distends.

In a nearly upside down and backwards position the blood vessels to the stomach are compressed.

Without circulation the stomach tissue discolors and dies.