
Could it have been bloat?

Posted by shep - 2008/11/04 14:41

I am trying to keep my emotions in check and explain the facts. Any input would be great...

We lost our nearly 13 year old Berner mix on Sunday. We arrived back from vacation late Saturday night and he was happy and perky. Early morning he had vomited his entire dinner and was very lethargic. He has had his good and bad days, and since he was so happy the night before, I thought he was having another bad day.

When we came home from grocery shopping, Jake met me in the living room but was not happy. He gave me a wag, stiffly walked a few feet and did a slow collapse. His gums were very pale and as we were getting ready to take him to the Emergency clinic, he coughed up blood.

I hate this emergency clinic. They could barely feel a pulse on him when we arrived. Xrays did not show any masses - which is what the vet was looking for, but the vet said it looked as if he had some food still in his stomach. This perplexed me as he had refused food and vomited his dinner. (He was a dog who NEVER missed a meal.) Could this have been a gas build up? He was shocky, was given a liter of IV fluids. After the fluids his gum color was returning but his respiration was still very bad, and he was still dry heaving and coughing up blood. We knew he was in pain, and he was unresponsive to us, so we let him go to where he would no longer be in pain. Due to his low BP, the euthanasia took longer than it would in a dog with normal circulation.

Two of my dog friends suggested bloat. I know about bloat but never experienced it before. He was not a candidate for surgery at his advanced age and with how ill he was - so I am not second guessing our decision to euthanise. I think I am more upset that the ER vet never even considered bloat. She actually questioned our decision to euthanise without a confirmed diagnosis. I wanted to smack her. I was able to speak with my own vet later that evening and he was so supportive. He told me the diagnosis was his advanced age and that we did the right thing.

Re:Could it have been bloat?

Posted by maobao - 2008/11/05 10:43

Too late and so sorry for you loss. I've seen bloat at my vet clinic....
It looks like "said dog" has swallowed a basketball on one side of the body.

This will give you an idea of where the canine stomach is
<http://www.vetmed.wsu.edu/ClientED/anatomy/#Dog>

It honestly looks the dog has a basketball on side; more so then the other.
And one or another will happen with it; they either usually start vomiting up bile or cannot pass a bowel movement.

Coughing up blood with bloat I've never heard of and been in bloat breeds IE Afghan Hounds; Mastiff; Great Danes.....some lines of Shar-pei can bloat but not as likely; also is true with French Bulldogs....

Any dog can bloat but it usually the larger (which sort of lets out Afghan Hounds) breeds or very deep chested with a "tuck up".

Re:Could it have been bloat?

Posted by daemondox - 2008/11/15 03:47

I'm sorry to hear about your dog. It doesn't sound like it was bloat though. One of my boys bloated and torted his stomach a year ago. He started wheezing and gagging but could never bring anything up. The wheezing made me think it was allergies so I tried to give him an antihistimine. I couldn't get him to open his mouth. His lips were wet from salivating and his gums were starting to go pale. It sounded like he was trying to burp which clued me in to the fact that it was bloat. He had the surgery and he was fine. His stomach didn't distend very much and I think that's because I feed a grain free dog food. The grain will ferment and cause more gasses to build up. It sounds like your boy may have eaten something bad that may have poisoned him. Sorry for your loss.

Re:Could it have been bloat?

Posted by lablady - 2008/11/15 09:21

I lost a 5 1/2 month old puppy to gastric torsion the beginning of this year. I had never had it in any dog, let alone a puppy. By the time we got to the vet, she was in deep shock and we didn't try to save her, as she would not have survived anesthesia anyhow. All I can say, is I am sorry. Without a necropsy, you'll probably never know for sure, but the large abdomen is a give-away, and you didn't mention that.

Dian

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