

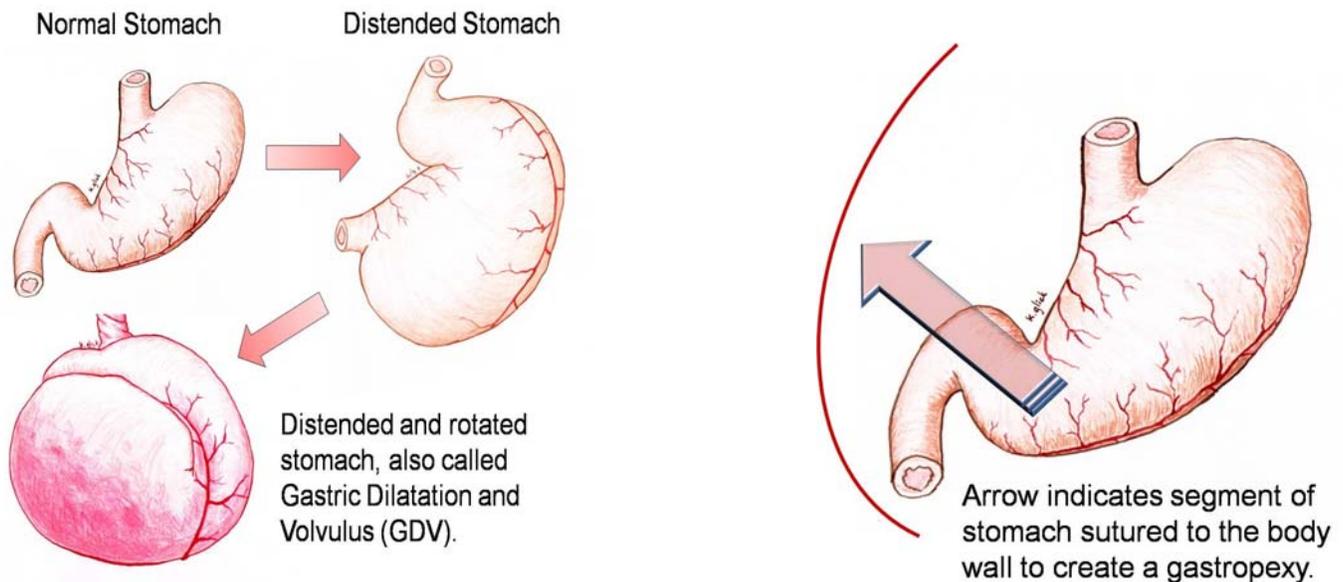
Veterinary Specialists of Alaska, P.C. Client Information Sheet: Laparoscopic Gastropexy to prevent Gastric Dilatation and Volvulus

Laparoscopic Gastropexy to prevent Gastric Dilatation and Volvulus

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What is Gastric Dilatation and Volvulus?

The term gastric dilatation and volvulus (GDV) describes a life threatening condition that develops in some dogs. In this condition, often referred to as “bloat”, the stomach rapidly fills with gas and air and then rotates upon itself. Once rotated, air cannot escape from the stomach.



The drawings on the left show how the normal stomach can become distended then rotate around its axis. With extreme distention of the stomach, blood supply to the stomach and blood flow to the rest of the body are decreased or interrupted. Without treatment, this combination of events proves fatal in nearly all cases. Even with emergency treatment, which typically involves surgery, up to 30 percent of affected dogs die.

What is a Gastropexy?

Gastropexy is a procedure that is performed to prevent the stomach from rotating, therefore preventing the fatal sequence of events associated with volvulus. When a gastropexy is performed, the bottom part of the stomach is secured to the abdominal wall, effectively holding the stomach in place and preventing volvulus in the future. The drawing above on the right shows how a gastropexy prevents GDV.

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What is Laparoscopic Gastropexy?

Gastropexy can now be performed using laparoscopic techniques. This minimally invasive procedure is performed by introducing surgical instruments through two or three small incisions. This greatly reduces bruising of the abdominal wall and postoperative pain. Shorter anesthetic time and faster recovery are further benefits of this procedure, when compared to gastropexy performed using the standard “open” techniques.



Laparoscopic view of completed gastropexy.

Which Dogs Should Have a Gastropexy?

Some breeds of dogs are at high risk for gastric dilatation and volvulus and should be considered for laparoscopic gastropexy. Examples include Great Danes, St. Bernards, Standard Poodles, Cocker Spaniels, German Shepherds, Malinois, and Gordon and Irish Setters. Similarly, dogs that have previously bloated and dogs that have had a parent or sibling that has bloated are good candidates for laparoscopic gastropexy. Laparoscopic gastropexy can be performed in conjunction with other laparoscopic procedures such as ovariectomy or cryptorchidectomy.



“Dilly”, German Shepherd, Photo courtesy of Meleah Fowler

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Your Pet's Comfort and Safety is Our Priority

That is why all of our surgical patients have physical examinations and, if necessary, pre-anesthetic blood work performed prior to undergoing surgery.

- An intravenous catheter is placed to allow fluid and pain medication administration during the procedure.
- We use state of the art equipment to monitor your pet's heart rate, blood pressure, heart rhythm, body temperature and oxygen blood saturation.
- Our air flow body warmers help to keep your pet warm and comfortable.
- We believe that all patients experience pain.

That is why all our surgical patients are treated before their surgery, during their surgery and after their surgery with pain medication.

That is why we prefer using minimally invasive surgical techniques whenever possible.

Your VSOAK - Team

Veterinary Specialists of Alaska (originally Alaska Veterinary Surgical Services) was founded by **Mike Edwards**, DVM, MS, Diplomate ACVS, in 1996. It is our mission to work with your veterinarian to provide your pet with the highest quality of veterinary surgical treatment options available. We are proud to offer the advantages of minimally invasive surgery such as arthroscopy, laparoscopy, thoracoscopy, and laparoscopic assisted surgery to your pet.

Dirsko J.F. von Pfeil, Dr.med.vet, DVM, DACVS, DECVS, Adjunct Professor in Small Animal Surgery at Michigan State University, joined our practice in October, 2008. He was trained in small animal surgery at Michigan State University prior to his employment as assistant clinical professor of small animal surgery at Kansas State University. He has experience in arthroscopy, thoracoscopy and laparoscopy and has been the driving force in bringing minimally invasive surgery to our practice.

