

BLOAT + EMERGENCY!

HOW A WEBINAR HELPED SAVE A LIFE



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It was Friday evening. Fridolin, Clark's two-year-old Bernese Mountain Dog, had finished his dinner and was lying quietly in the backyard. A sudden yelp startled Clark! He let Fridolin back in the house, watching him closely. His beautiful Berner couldn't settle - he was restless and seemed anxious, with his pupils dilated. Then he started hiccupping or trying to retch. His abdomen looked and felt normal, but Clark knew something was off.

Thanks to a recent AKC Canine Health Foundation (CHF) webinar, Clark recognized that Fridolin's symptoms could mean "bloat," (gastric dilatation and volvulus, or GDV), a life-threatening condition in which the stomach fills with gas and twists upon itself. With the financial security of pet health insurance and knowing the advanced level of care needed to treat GDV, Clark rushed Fridolin to a nearby emergency clinic. Fridolin had emergency surgery to release the gas and "tack" his stomach to prevent future rotation (a procedure known as gastropexy). He was released the next day and has fully recovered.

Clark credits his recognition that Fridolin was having a true medical emergency to having watched the CHF-sponsored webinar - *GDV - What We Know, and What We Wish We Knew*. "FYI: Your GDV webinar was instrumental in saving my dog's life—he bloated a week after I watched it," Clark shared. "I then watched it again to make sure I understood all the details of the disease."

CHF sponsors the Canine Health Bytes webinar series, presented through the educational platform VetVine, as part of its educational outreach. Webinars feature leaders in the field of veterinary health research and offer practical advice on common health concerns. Viewers can pre-submit questions and watch live or on demand. In addition to webinars, CHF also offers educational articles and infectious disease fact sheets to help you and your veterinarian stay up to date on the latest outcomes from ca-

nine health research.

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Clark originally watched the bloat webinar on the recommendation of the Bernese Mountain Dog Club of America. A club member and Bernese Mountain Dog breeder, he says he was aware of the disease, but valued the comprehensive nature of the webinar, which was presented by CHF-funded investigator Dr. Elizabeth Rozanski.

"Dr. Rozanski covered all the details of bloat," Clark says. "She explained that we don't have a good understanding of what causes it. All we can do is recognize it and go to the right vet at the right time. I heard stories from owners whose dogs died because they waited too long to seek treatment. Recognizing the symptoms of bloat early is key, and this webinar brought that home clearly!"

Clark also notes that the webinar helped him deal with the emotional toll of Fridolin's bloat emergency. "I received contradictory information from various breeders and veterinarians on the causes

of bloat, while according to Dr. Rozanski, in fact we don't really know the causes of GDV," he says. "This takes a lot of pressure off while I ponder the question, why Fridolin and me?"

Other topics covered in the Canine Health Bytes webinar series include the latest information on conditions that affect all dogs such as canine flu, epilepsy, and cancer, and those that affect certain breeds such as Golden Retriever Pigmentary Uveitis and Norwich Terrier Upper Airway Syndrome. Also included are conditions that affect specific body types, such as bloat in deep-chested dogs. Visit www.akcchf.org/vetvine to view the full menu of upcoming and on demand webinars.

Clark says, "If you haven't yet seen this webinar, you must." But the best testimonial about the value of being an educated dog owner is having a healthy Fridolin enjoying life after a frightening health scare.



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