

## My Experience With bloat and Thyroid Issues With Gemini

Gemini was a real show dog. He loved to be in the ring. It really turned him on. However, he absolutely hated riding in the car. He got carsick and nothing I tried with various herbal and allopathic remedies seemed to help. Was this a symptom of what was to come? I often wonder.

We had been at a show about 4 hours from home on the weekend and returned Sunday night. Tuesday morning at about 1am, Gemini woke me up retching next to my bed. I took him out to the kitchen where there was better light because my immediate fear was that he was in bloat. I'd never seen

bloat before, but I'd memorized the description and symptoms. When I got him to the kitchen, he was not any wider than normal and he was continuing to wretch. He brought up a small amount of white froth, but the continued retching was not productive. I did notice that his lower abdomen was very distended and I knew this must be some form of bloat. I called the emergency clinic and told them we were on our way.

When I arrived, the attending vet did not think this dog looked like he was in bloat, but I was very insistent that he was and that an x-ray would show this. He performed the x-ray and found that indeed,

Gemini was in bloat and he was also in torsion. The surgeon was called and I helped the vet prep my boy for surgery. Gemini was just 2 years and 3 months old at the time.

The surgeon arrived and my luck was with me, he was a bloat specialist and he did a marvelous job taking care of my boy and tacking his stomach to prevent future episodes.

Well, about 9 months later, we were on our way home from a show on a holiday weekend. I lived out on the coast at the time in a rural area frequented by vacationers. It was a Sunday and all the weekenders were on their way home. There was a solid line of traffic stopped between two stop signs about 7 miles apart and extending up to a point just a few miles from my road. It was hot and I was thankful we were headed in the other direction from all this traffic. As I got closer to my road, Gemini seemed very anxious like he had to "go". I pulled over and he did have a small amount of diarrhea. I got him home within 10 minutes of that stop. I got him and my bitch out of the truck and noticed that he was in bloat. I left him out in the yard and took my bitch inside.

When I came out to get him, he had drank a full 5 qt bowl of water and had thrown it and allot of white froth up and had totally decompressed himself. It was instant relief for him. He seemed fine just that fast. Being tacked he didn't torsion again luckily.

I called the emergency vet and given the traffic situation and the stress he had riding in the car, I thought he was going to be better off staying home unless he showed signs of distress. At this point, his heart rate was normal, his capillary refill time was normal and I decided to stay in touch with the emergency clinic by phone and not try to get him in unless there was a change for the worse.

He was fine the rest of the day and night. The next day, I took him to my regular vet and she said he seemed to be in good condition. Gem was now 3 1/2.

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In the summer of 1995, I moved from my coastal, rural community to Roseville, Ca - located at the upper end of the San Joaquin Valley. About a year after this move, Gemini started to have weekly bloat episodes. I would be sitting here at the computer and he would suddenly start gulping air and "puffing up". I keep pure liquid Simethicone on hand and before I could get to the bathroom and back, he would have thrown up and decompressed himself. This was baffling my vet. And since he was never in this condition when he was at the vets office, there wasn't much for him to go on.

Now comes the most interesting part - at least to me. All during his life, Gemini had skin problems on and off. He had chronic folliculitis which had been treated with a variety of medications. The best results were obtained with Keflex. He was tested for allergies and thyroid function several times during the previous 5 years of his life. I happened to attend a seminar with Dr. W. Jean Dodds, who specializes in thyroid and other metabolic disorders.

She exposed us to the difference in thyroid function testing and I found out that there was a more thorough thyroid function test available, but only at Michigan State University and another lab that she herself used.

Gemini had classic symptoms of low thyroid and I had my vet draw the blood and separate the serum so I could send it to her for evaluation. She found that although all the prior tests results had shown that Gemini's thyroid function "was within normal range", he was definitely low thyroid. She prescribed soloxine. Once Gemini started on the soloxine, the bloat stopped. He had been having weekly bloats for a year prior to this and he lived over two years afterward and never had another episode of bloat.

Hmmm, what do you think about that? This is just one dog, but I think that clearly in this individual, there was a definite relationship between the thyroid function (or lack of!) and the tendency for bloat.

This seems to me that it would be worth further study.

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Here is a link to a Hemopet information page.

[Hemopet](http://www.prodogs.com//chn/hemopet/index.htm)

Here is a link to Colorado State University for their new vaccination protocol.

[Colorado State College of Veterinary Medicine](http://www.cvmb.colostate.edu/vth/savp2.html)

Here are links to articles by W. Jean Dodds, DVM.

[The Immune System and Disease Resistance](http://www.golden-retriever.com/dodds.html)

[Vaccination For Dogs at Risk for Immunological Disorders](http://www.dclink.com/mastiff/rpvaccin.htm)

There is a lot of information on the web regarding vaccinations, thyroid and other related subjects. This is just a small sample. Check for yourself and see what you find.