



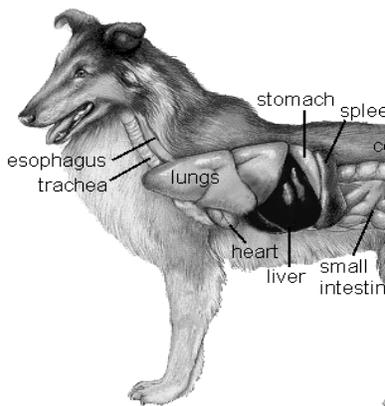
# ANIMAL TALK

Winter 2007

P.O. Box 14956, Portland, OR 97293

## Bloat in Cats and Dogs

It's true—animals can get bloated too. It's a little different than with people, though, and a lot more dangerous. If your veterinarian says that your dog has bloat, she means that your dog's stomach is full of excess gas, fluid, or foam. Bloat can be caused by a number of things.



Most often dogs and cats get bloat because they swallow excess air. It can also occur when the valve at the bottom of the stomach is blocked and the gas and other material produced by the digestive process can't exit the stomach.

Bloat happens very rapidly and can be fatal in 30 minutes when it's severe. If your pet's abdomen is distended and/or you notice nausea, vomiting, attempts to vomit, sudden weakness, or collapse, contact your veterinarian immediately. Bloat is a life-threatening condition.

### GDV

Often, when the stomach becomes enlarged (or dilated), it then twists somewhere between a quarter and a full turn; this twisting is called volvulus. When an animal has gastric dilation and volvulus (GDV), the openings at the top and the bottom of the stomach twist, blocking all materials from entering or leaving. As the digestive process continues, the stomach will swell more and more. As the stomach gets larger, it can press against blood vessels and decrease circulation.

## January

Month that cats begin to go into heat each year.

### 63 DAYS

Gestation period for cats.

### 5,000

Number of cats a single female cat and her offspring produce over just

**7 years**, according to a group of mathematicians at the University of Washington (assuming each female cat produces two litters of six kittens each year, with three-quarters of them dying before reaching reproductive age, and no more dying after reaching adulthood).



## SPAY AND NEUTER!

Source: Carl Bialik, "Trying to Herd a Cat Stat," *The Wall Street Journal* (Oct. 12, 2006).

## BLOAT, CONT.

This can eventually lead to death of the tissue in the stomach walls. It can also take up some of the room the diaphragm needs to expand, which makes it hard for the animal to breathe. If left untreated, the circulation and breathing problems caused by GDV and bloat can cause infections, bleeding disorders, heart failure, and sudden death. GDV is most often found in larger dogs that have eaten a large or abnormal meal.

### What to Look for



The most obvious sign of bloat is a distended, swollen-looking belly, particularly one that appears quickly. Some other noticeable symptoms of bloat

occur when an animal tries to empty its stomach. Particularly with GDV, dogs and cats will try to vomit or belch but aren't able to; they will retch and seem restless and nauseated. They may also become short of breath as their abdomens become compressed. Some animals may act depressed or show signs of pain. In severe cases, the pressure the stomach places on blood vessels can cause irregular blood flow, abnormal heart rhythms, and shock, which can cause animals to collapse and can lead to rapid death.

### What to Do

Bloat must be treated by a veterinarian immediately. If she suspects your pet has bloat, your veterinarian can stabilize him and treat him for shock by giving him intravenous fluids and monitoring his heart rate, breathing, and blood pressure. She can check for the condition by performing a physical exam and abdominal xrays. She can also check for gas in his stomach by inserting a tube through the esophagus or inserting a needle through the abdomen. If an animal is diagnosed simply with bloat—that is, if the stomach hasn't become twisted—sometimes the veterinarian can simply decompress the stomach with the tube or needle, and no other treatment is necessary.

If an animal has GDV, on the other hand, he will most likely need to be treated surgically. During surgery, a veterinarian can untwist and reposition the stomach so that material can move through it. Then she can examine the tissue of the stomach to make sure it wasn't injured or deprived of blood when it swelled. She can also check the spleen, which is attached to the stomach and can be damaged when the stomach twists. Often veterinarians will also perform a gastropexy during surgery, which involves attaching the stomach to the abdominal wall so it won't twist again in the future. A dog that has had bloat is at a great risk of GDV in the future if a gastropexy isn't done.

### Prevention



Because the causes of bloat aren't entirely clear, there is no known way to prevent it absolutely. Veterinarians do know that large breed dogs with broad, deep, barrel chests are more likely to develop bloat than other animals; if you have a breed

like this, you should watch carefully for bloat. You should also feed your pet small, regularly spaced meals, which are less likely to stretch his stomach. Presoak the food in water for 30 minutes before feeding your dog. You can prevent him from drinking large volumes of water at one time, too. Limiting exercise after meals can help as well. When animals run with a full stomach, the stomach swings like a pendulum and has a greater chance of flipping over and twisting itself. Eating something out of the garbage or eating anything else they aren't used to can also cause animals to develop gas, which can lead to bloat and GDV.

The best way to protect your pet against bloat is to keep a close eye on him and watch for any strange behavior. If you notice anything about your pet that seems new or unusual, contact your veterinarian immediately.

# SUCCESS STORIES

## Blondie/Amber

Blondie came to live with us in June. She is now Amber, and was named by my sister, after we couldn't agree on a name!

We think we fit very well with each other. Amber allows Colby and Eli to carry her around, draped over a shoulder. In the morning, she follows my husband, Pete, and talks to him until he finds one of her toys and plays with her. She chases the Lego train on the track, which makes us all laugh. She often sleeps at my feet.

We had different ideas of what cat would fit well with us. The boys wanted a playful kitten, and I wanted a lap cat. They now agree that she is plenty energetic and I am happy that she's just enough cuddly. We all agree that she's extremely bright – you really can't trick her by hiding something. And we also agree that she's the reason for the expression, "curiosity got the cat." She wants to be the first to investigate anything new.

So, we send our thanks to you and your team for taking care of her until she came home with us. We think she's pretty happy here, and so are we.

Beth Hutchins (and Eli, Colby, and Pete Skeggs)



## Pretty Face/Tiki

I first met Tiki (formerly Pretty Face) when she was a tiny stray, desperate for food but unwilling to accept any other attention or help. Then one day she honored me by coming to me for help when she was ready to deliver a litter of kittens. Tiki had six beautiful and healthy kittens in the safety of my spare bedroom. Your organization responded immediately to my request for help since I was not in a position to care for seven additional cats at that time. Tiki stayed with her foster parent until her kittens were weaned.



In May, I brought her to our new home. Since coming home, Tiki has made remarkable progress: she plays, she chats with me, she sleeps peacefully, she even lets me hold her (not for very long, but I hope that will change).

My resident senior cat, Nicholas (age 17), has reached the conclusion that Tiki will be staying and even seems interested in becoming friends. He seems to have decided that she is more than just an overactive nuisance. She is at least fun for him to watch. And, when I am not supposed to see, they have been known to groom each other. The enclosed picture was taken recently; Tiki has gained a little weight (she is now a whopping seven pounds). Tiki, Nicholas, and I thank you.

Nancy Roach

## SUCCESS STORIES



### Ruby and Violet

In June we decided to adopt Ruby, a beautiful Siamese mix who had recently had a litter of kittens. After meeting Ruby and her four babies, I was very taken with the little black kitten of the bunch. She was a bit shy but very playful and so sweet! My husband Jim and I had only planned on adopting Ruby, but we fell in love and decided to adopt little Violet, too.

Ruby and Violet adjusted almost instantly to our home and our dog, Wally, a Basset Hound/German Shepherd mix. The cats have explored every nook and cranny of our home and have discovered a few favorite spots. We can often find them on Jim's office chair, the couch, or any place in the guest room, which was previously Wally's domain. They have their own indoor cat garden, complete with catnip and rye grass. They also have an indoor window box where they can watch birds and enjoy their food and water without being bothered too much by Wally. We are so happy with our decision to adopt Ruby and Violet and look forward to years of companionship with our newest family members.

Thank you Animal Rescue!

Megan and Jim Rowley

## ALUMNI

### Henry and Wally

In September 2004 we adopted two 4-month-old kittens from ARCF named Henry and Wally. Both were very friendly when we got them. Wally enjoyed cuddling, and Henry enjoyed curling up on your shoulder while you were sleeping. The boys are now three years old. I



taught Wally to fetch but he only fetches with certain hairbands with cloth flowers on them. Henry likes to catch flies and eat them alive. They both love sitting by the back door watching all the birds fly by.

We can't imagine not having these little furballs in our lives. Thanks ARCF!

Elizabeth Jennings



## Kismet/Lizzie Burnside

Dear Animal Rescue Friends,

Attached is a photo of Lizzie Burnside (nee Kismet), who came to live with me last fall when I lost Phoebe (who had come from ARCF 12 years prior). Lizzie had been hanging out on the street and cadging lunch from construction workers, but she's way too social to have ever been feral.

Lizzie's a delight: fearless, funny, and increasingly snuggly, mostly in the middle of the night. She occasionally joins me in the shower, prefers drinking from the bathroom faucet, and persists in serving as the centerpiece at dinner parties. And, interestingly enough, she still loves blue-collar guys. She climbs the ladder to cuddle the electrician, sticks her head up the piano tuner's pant leg, and insists on "helping" the plumber.

Thanks so much for this beautiful, delightful cat and for all you do.

Marian Massey



Kismet



We've had another interesting quarter full of emergencies, many spays and neuters and more adoptions than we've had in a long time. Our emergencies consisted of one cat swallowing a sewing needle (and needing surgery to remove it), a puppy with a broken elbow, another puppy who fell down some stairs and broke bones, and several cats with broken bones. That's a lot of xrays and surgeries. We've had five foster homes treating kittens with ringworm, which has a very long recovery period, not to mention trying to contain it to just the kittens. In three of the five homes, we are on our second month of treatment and are ferociously hoping it won't go longer than three months.

So once again, it's thanks to you that we can accomplish so much. I would like to say thank you to all of our foster parents for working so hard taking care of their little charges. Not only do they care for these animals while they wait for their perfect home, but they do a lot of other work for homeless animals as well. And we couldn't do it without **you!**

—**Pam Brooks, President**

P.S. As we are going to print, the fires in southern California are raging. This situation is a good reminder to always keep enough hard-sided carriers in easy reach to put your cat or small dog into as you run out of the house. A leash should be readily available for larger dogs. Think about the different types of disasters and what you might have to do to make sure your pets will be safe.

Also, with the holiday season coming, remember that pets can get into trouble with things like wrapping ribbon, decorations (especially tinsel), and poisonous holiday plants (*e.g.*, poinsettias).

# IN MEMORIAM



## In Memoriam

Jan Lucky lost sweet little Emma. Emma was an older cat who found ARCF volunteer Jan Lewis when Jan was walking her dog. Emma had cancer on her ears and face, so her ears were amputated. When Jan Lucky heard about Emma, she met her and fell in love.

Carolyn McAlear lost Ellsworth and Emily this past spring and summer at ripe old ages. They were adopted in 1993.

Serena Harris lost Jasper to a brain tumor. She was fostering him for us with the rest of his litter, but Serena considered him her own, because he was having seizures and thus was not adoptable.

Pam Brooks lost sweet little Hunter, just a baby.

Lorraine Jones lost her longtime friend Miss America, a cat of beauty and attitude.

## SPAY AND NEUTER COUPONS

On request, we can provide coupons for spaying and neutering cats and dogs. These coupons make this procedure very affordable. Several good, full-service vets participate in this program. For coupons, call ARCF at 503-284-8768.

## ANIMAL PLACEMENT UPDATE

In August, September, and October, we placed **40** cats in permanent, responsible, loving homes.

Our major expenses for those three months were:

Veterinary fees: **\$37,281.21**

*These expenses also include veterinary care for the pets of Portland's homeless.*

Food, meds, supplies: **\$1,158.66**

*Mostly kitten food and ringworm medicine.*

Advertising to find new homes: **\$360.39**

Newsletter *Animal Talk*: **\$905.65**

*This number increases as we increase our mailing list.*

## WHY DOES MY CAT SLEEP SO MUCH?

Most likely because she's a perfectly normal cat. It's a natural instinct for cats to sleep most of the time. It's an adaptation they developed to survive in the wild. Wild cats are hunters and predators. They are generally active only at times when there is the day, they hunt; the rest of the day, they eating, and just resting.



This is why your cat seems to have only two in the sun is just as much average kitty attacking everything in sight. If you're worried that your cat sleeps more than most cats, however, you should take her to your veterinarian for a full exam.

food available. For short periods during conserve their energy by sleeping,

settings: "high speed" and "off." Lazing behavior as racing around the house and

# CAT TRIVIA

Cats have 30 vertebrae--15 more than humans have.

Cats do not have a collarbone, so they can fit through any opening the size of their head.

A cat has 500 skeletal muscles (humans have 650).

Cats have 32 muscles that control the outer ear (compared to a human's 6 muscles each).

A cat can rotate its ears independently 180 degrees, and can turn in the direction of sound 10 times faster than the best watchdog.

A cat has more bones than a human; humans have 206, cats have 230 (some sources list 245 bones, and state that bones may fuse together as the cat ages).

A cat's hearing is much more sensitive than a human's or a dog's. A cat's hearing stops at 65 kilohertz (kHz); a human's stops at 20 kHz.

Recent studies have shown that cats can see blue and green. There is disagreement as to whether they can see red.

A cat's field of vision is about 185 degrees.

Blue-eyed white cats are often deaf.

In relation to their body size, cats have the largest eyes of any mammal.

A cat has approximately 60 to 80 million olfactory cells (a human has 5 to 20 million).

Cats have a special scent organ located in the roof of their mouth called the Jacobson's organ. It analyzes smells and is the reason you sometimes see your cat "sneer" when it encounters a strong odor.

A cat has a total of 24 whiskers, four rows of whiskers on each side. The upper two rows can move independently of the bottom two rows. A cat uses its whiskers for measuring distances.



## HAVE YOU ADOPTED FROM US?

We are asking all ARCF alumni to check in and give us an update on your pets, no matter when you adopted from us. Send us an email, a note, a photo, whatever. We want to run some "where are they now" features in the newsletter. If you adopted kittens from us, it would be fun to see baby pictures and grown-up pictures. Email us at [arcf@pdx-petadoption.org](mailto:arcf@pdx-petadoption.org) or write us at P.O. Box 14956, Portland, OR 97293-0956.

## THANK YOU!

Thanks to everyone who helped us this year -- we couldn't do it without you!

North Portland Veterinary Hospital, Cat Hospital of Portland, Rose City Vet, Laurelhurst Vet, Tigard Animal Hospital, Carma, Chrisi, Erin, Jackie, Katie, Leah, Lorraine, Nancy, Pam, Ronnie, Lenore, Marcia, Serena, Gracia, Anne, Sara, Margery, Sharon, Sean, Ruth, Wendy, Heidi, Judy, Elaine, Amy, Carol, Leslie, and all of our loyal supporters!

## CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

**Be a foster home or “emergency” foster home.**  
(An emergency home means you will have the animal for two weeks maximum.)

**Deliver copies of our newsletter** to places of business (pet stores, vets, doctors’ offices, groomers, day care, libraries, restaurants, etc.). If you want, you can do this in your own neighborhood (you pick the spots). Or you can be assigned a delivery route.

**Check addresses** of potential adopters.

**Provide transportation.** Transport cats to/from vets, pick up and deliver food/litter, pick up and deliver the newsletter, etc.

**Write articles** for the ARCF newsletter.

**Do marketing/PR.** Figure out ways to get our name out there and known (and then do it).

**Do outreach.** Liaise with other animal rescue groups.

To volunteer, contact ARCF at [arcf@pdx-petadoption.org](mailto:arcf@pdx-petadoption.org) or 503-284-8768.

## ANIMAL TALK

*Animal Talk* is a quarterly newsletter published by Animal Rescue & Care Fund, Inc.

**Editor:** Jackie Fischer

### 2007-08 Officers

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Animal Rescue & Care Fund, Inc., is a private, nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) corporation funded solely by private donations. A board of directors makes decisions on policies and activities. All funds are used for veterinary care, food, advertising to find new adoptive homes, and publishing the quarterly newsletter, *Animal Talk*. Volunteers provide temporary homes for the animals until they are placed in permanent, responsible, loving homes.



Animal Rescue & Care Fund depends entirely on your donations to help the animals. Our work includes rescue, medical aid, food and shelter, humane education, neutering/spaying, and more. All workers are volunteers.

**Your contribution goes directly to help the animals.** All contributions are tax-deductible.

I enclose \_\_\_\_\_ for humane work. (\$35 sponsors an animal, but we appreciate any amount!)

Check here to receive a photo and story about the animal.

I’m interested in being a volunteer. Please call me at \_\_\_\_\_ or email me at \_\_\_\_\_.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to:** Animal Rescue & Care Fund, P.O. Box 14956, Portland, OR 97293-0956.

