

HAEMOABDOMEN IN DOGS

Recognising Internal Bleeding and Abdominal Emergencies

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1 WHAT IS HAEMOABDOMEN?

Haemoabdomen refers to the accumulation of blood within the abdominal cavity.

Common causes include:

- Ruptured splenic tumours
- Liver tumours
- Trauma
- Blood clotting disorders
- Ruptured blood vessels
- Certain cancers

Blood loss into the abdomen can occur suddenly or gradually.

Why is it dangerous?

- Severe blood loss
- Reduced oxygen delivery
- Shock
- Organ failure
- Death if untreated



2 DID YOU KNOW?

- Internal bleeding is often invisible externally.
- Some dogs appear normal between bleeding episodes.
- Pale gums can be an early warning sign.
- Older dogs are more commonly affected.
- Rapid diagnosis improves survival.



3 RECOGNISE THE SIGNS

Signs may include:

- ✓ Sudden weakness
- ✓ Collapse
- ✓ Pale or white gums
- ✓ Increased respiratory rate
- ✓ Panting
- ✓ Lethargy
- ✓ Reduced appetite
- ✓ Abdominal swelling
- ✓ Weakness after exercise
- ✓ Intermittent episodes of collapse



IMPORTANT

Some dogs appear to improve temporarily before deteriorating again.

4 WHICH DOGS ARE MOST AT RISK?

Higher-risk dogs include:

- Golden Retrievers
- German Shepherds
- Labrador Retrievers
- Boxers
- Older dogs
- Dogs with splenic masses
- Dogs with clotting disorders

Risk factors include:

- Increasing age
- Splenic tumours
- Trauma
- Certain cancers
- Rodenticide toxicity



5 WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you suspect internal bleeding:

- ✓ Keep your dog calm
- ✓ Contact your veterinarian immediately
- ✓ Transport your dog carefully
- ✓ Seek emergency care without delay

DO NOT

- ✗ Wait for signs to improve
- ✗ Allow strenuous exercise
- ✗ Delay veterinary treatment
- ✗ Attempt home treatment



6 HOW IS HAEMOABDOMEN DIAGNOSED?

Your veterinarian may perform:

- Physical examination
- Gum colour assessment
- Blood tests
- Packed cell volume (PCV)
- Ultrasound examination
- Abdominal fluid assessment
- Radiographs (X-rays)
- Blood pressure monitoring
- Clotting tests

Ultrasound

Ultrasound is often the most useful test for detecting abdominal bleeding.



7 TREATMENT OPTIONS

Treatment depends on the cause and severity.

Options may include:

- Intravenous fluids
- Oxygen therapy
- Blood transfusions
- Emergency stabilisation
- Pain relief
- Surgery
- Removal of a bleeding spleen (splenectomy)
- Intensive monitoring



SURGERY

Many dogs with splenic bleeding require emergency surgery.

8 RECOVERY & AFTERCARE

Recovery may involve:

- Hospitalisation
- Restricted exercise
- Follow-up blood tests
- Repeat ultrasound examinations
- Pain management
- Ongoing monitoring

Recovery varies depending on the underlying cause.



COMMON CAUSES OF HAEMOABDOMEN

- SPLENIC TUMOURS**
Most common cause.
- LIVER TUMOURS**
May rupture and bleed.
- TRAUMA**
Vehicle accidents and severe injury.

- CLOTTING DISORDERS**
Including rodenticide poisoning.
- RUPTURED BLOOD VESSELS**
Less common but potentially fatal.



ADDITIONAL TIPS

- Pale gums are always concerning.
- Collapse should never be ignored.
- Internal bleeding may occur without visible wounds.
- Older dogs should be assessed promptly if weakness develops.
- Emergency treatment saves lives.



! EVERY DOG COUNTS

If your dog develops weakness, collapse, pale gums, abdominal swelling, rapid breathing, or unexplained lethargy, seek veterinary care immediately.

Every minute counts.

Early diagnosis, stabilisation, and treatment provide the best chance of survival.

