

Products to Prevent Bloat in Dogs

By Kerri Danskin

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As the editor of Pet Style News, I have the great joy of seeing all kinds of new and interesting pet products since manufacturers and their public relations firms sometimes send me samples. Last week, a product called Portion Pacer crossed my desk and brought up a topic with which I became familiar back when I worked as a veterinary assistant a million years ago.

Portion Pacer is a stainless steel, weighted ball that dog owners can place in either a food or water dish to slow down a dog's eating or drinking. It's a departure from the more common solution to this problem, which is typically a plastic bowl with some raised columns or bumps placed throughout so the dog has to eat around something and can't scarf the whole bowl immediately like he might normally do.

This is the first product I have seen that does not incorporate the slow-down method into the bowl itself. I know a lot of pet boutique shoppers might like it because they buy their dog bowls for both appearance and function and might not want to exchange their designer ceramics for a heavy-duty looking plastic or metal bowl.

I can't speak to the question of whether this product and other slow-down methods really do help to prevent bloat, choking and vomiting as they are apparently designed to do, but I can say that I remember with great clarity the seriousness of gastric dilation and volvulus (GDV, which can result from bloat) from my veterinary office days. Even the sickest dogs that came through our doors usually didn't act like they were in pain, but the dogs with GDV (which Jon Gaspar, DVM discusses here) were so obviously suffering. If these types of products can help to prevent that (and I'd be interested to hear what vets have to say), then they're a great addition to the world of pet products.

Leslie Sinclair, DVM, offers some advice for owners whose dogs suffer from bloat and GDV [here](#).