

<http://sidneyme.blogspot.com/>

Sidney, chocolate lab, with congenital ME is Honored with the Ceremonial Puck Drop at the Lake Erie Monsters Hockey Club. Sidney is 5 years old and doing Great!



[www.baileychairs4dogs.com](http://www.baileychairs4dogs.com)



Watch Gremlin on YouTube  
Hope for M.E



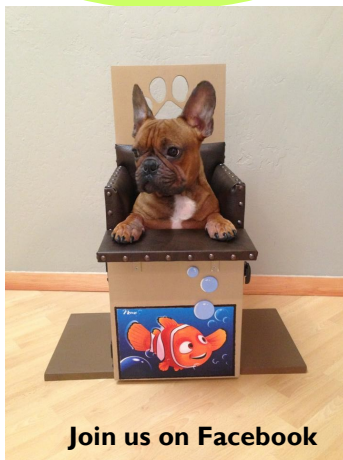
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Upright Canine Brigade  
...Ask me about my chair...



# What You Should Know About ME

**Fact #1** Megaesophagus is **NOT** a death sentence.

**Fact #2** It can be managed with Upright Feedings and nutritional modifications.

**Fact #3** Megaesophagus dogs can live a long and happy life.

**Fact #4** Megaesophagus is NOT rare. There are thousands of puppies born with this condition every year. Many of them are euthanized by breeders simply because they can't be sold. Some puppies born with ME do outgrow it later on in life. Some puppies are born with a birth defect known as PRAA (Persistent Right Aortic Arch). There is a surgery to correct it.

**Fact #5** Megaesophagus can be acquired or idiopathic (unknown) in older dogs. Underlying causes of Megaesophagus should always be sought out. Such diseases that can cause ME are Myasthenia Gravis, Addison Disease and Hypothyroidism. Simple blood test are administered to determine if a dog has these diseases.

**Fact #6** If your dog is diagnosed with ME, you are not alone! There are thousands of dedicated pet owners just like you that are willing to help you through the journey. Come join our Facebook groups, with 6000 + members worldwide and counting, for support, recipes and ideas on how to help your dog.

## How Do I Know My Dog Has ME?

**Megaesophagus** is exactly what it sounds like it is, an enlarged or stretched esophagus (tube that carries food from the mouth to the stomach). A normal esophagus moves food to the stomach with wave-like contractions called peristalsis. An ME dog's esophagus loses its muscle tone, becomes enlarged, and can develop pockets where food can become trapped. Since the esophagus does not function normally, food sits in the esophagus and doesn't make its way to the stomach. This can cause malnutrition and regurgitation of vast amounts of undigested materials.

### Signs and Symptoms:

Is your dog having difficulty eating? Does she regurgitate her food? Regurgitation is different than vomiting. When a dog regurgitates, it is usually quiet and the food rolls out of the mouth looking a lot like it went in. Vomiting is different. The dog will hunch over and retch digested or partial digested food and there usually is a lot of noise associated with the action.

**Aspiration Pneumonia.** When a dog regurgitates some of the food, water or saliva can go into the lungs. This causes an infection known as Aspiration Pneumonia or AP. It is imperative that your dog be seen right away by your vet if you suspect AP.

Common symptoms of pneumonia in dogs includes the dog showing signs of having trouble breathing, congestion, secretions from nose, coughing or sneezing, not drinking water or eating, not playing, incessant panting, a bluish tinge to the skin and sometimes a fever. Also, look for other signs of difficulty breathing, such as the dog pushing his or her lips out when breathing heavily.

## How Can I Help My ME Dog?

**# 1 Feed your Dog Upright in a "Bailey Chair"** After feedings, have your dog remain upright in the chair for at least 15-20 minutes.

**# 2 Food Consistency.** This takes some trial and error to get right. Some dogs do well with a slurry or milkshake consistency. Some do fine with soaked kibble and some do better with food shaped in little meatballs. Many ME dogs can not lap water and their water is added to their food. There are several recipes you can try to add nutrition and weight to your dog. Recipes can be found under the recipe tab at: [www.caninemegaesophagusinfo.com](http://www.caninemegaesophagusinfo.com)

**# 3 Smaller more frequent meals.**

**# 4 Try a "Pro Collar" or "Neck Hug".** This elevates your dog's head off the floor when they are laying down. Saliva often pools in their esophagus and this helps move the saliva down. You can find them at Petsmart or Petco and also at [www.wagtailfarms.com](http://www.wagtailfarms.com).

**# 5 Your Vet may prescribe an antacid** like Prilosec, Zantac or Pepcid to help with stomach

## Come Join the Conversation!

**Facebook: Canine Megaesophagus Support Group**

**Facebook: Upright Canine Brigade Megaesophagus Awareness and Support**

**Email: uprightcaninebrigade@gmail.com**  
[caninemegaesophagusinfo.com](http://caninemegaesophagusinfo.com)

