Common Boxer Issues

**Reverse Sneezing:** This condition is a cause of some alarm because it sounds like the dog has something stuck in his throat. It is believed to be due to a temporary spasm of the throat muscles or an accumulation of mucus. During an attack, the dog violently pulls air in through the nose, *producing a loud snorting noise* as if something is caught in the nose and the dog is trying to draw it in. The dog is perfectly normal before and after the attacks. There is no treatment.

**Bloat:** Also known as *gastric dilation-torsion complex*. This is an emergency and a life-threatening disease that usually affects dogs in the prime of their lives. Mortality rates approach 50%.

Bloat, also known as the *over-feeding (or over-eating) syndrome* involves the swelling of the stomach from trapped gas, fluid, or both. Once distended, the stomach may twist abruptly--the amount of twist determines whether it is torsion or volvulus. Some interesting facts about bloat:

- Dogs with bloat nearly always are between 4-7 years old; nearly 2/3 are males.
- Usually affects dogs of the larger, deeper chested breeds and rarely occurs in small breeds.
- Dogs who bloat tend to eat large amounts of dry kibble.
- They exercise vigorously after eating, and tend to drink water in large amounts after meals.
- They may have a history of digestive upsets (gastritis).
- There may be a familial association with other dogs who have bloated.

Our advice to prevent this from happening to your dog is:

- Feed your dog frequent small meals instead of one large one.
- Raise both the food and water dishes.
- Restrict activities right after eating (remember your mom's rule about swimming after you eat?)
- If your dog is a vacuum eater, try putting a tennis ball or a large stone in the food dish. He will have to try harder, routing around that ball to get to the food and won't be able to "suck" it down so quickly.

**Lumps & Bumps on or beneath the skin:**

All lumps and bumps MUST be checked out by a vet. The leading cause of death for boxers is cancer and a lump or bump is often the first sign of a potential cancer.
Corneal Ulcers:

Boxers are very prone to develop this eye disorder. It can result in blindness if left untreated. A veterinarian should be immediately consulted if you notice any of these symptoms:

Increased tear production or discharge

Squinting

Rubbing at the eyes

Redness of the eye and eyelids

A cloudy or hazy appearance to the eye

Hiding or avoiding light