



## WHY SHOULD I SPAY OR NEUTER MY PET?

Surgical sterilization of the female dog, commonly referred to as spaying, is one of the most significant aspects of female dog care an owner can provide. Spaying involves removal of the uterus and ovaries. It is a major surgery, but a commonly performed one, ideally performed while a female dog is still in puppyhood, prior to her first heat cycle. There are many reasons to spay your female dog.

- Reduce the number of unwanted pets
  - o In every community there are homeless pets that end up in an animal shelter. Many healthy, adoptable dogs sit in shelters waiting for a "forever home" and many end up being euthanized. By spaying and neutering our pets, we reduce the number of unwanted dogs and cats in our communities and in our animal shelters.
- Mammary Cancer prevention
  - o A female dog spayed before her first heat will have a near zero chance of developing mammary cancer.
- Pyometra Prevention
  - o Pyometra is the life-threatening infection of the uterus that generally occurs in middle-aged to older female dogs in the six weeks following heat. The uterus with pyometra swells dramatically and is filled with pus, bacteria, dying tissue and toxins. Without treatment, pyometra can be fatal.
- Convenience
  - o The female dog comes into heat every 8 months or so. There is a bloody vaginal discharge and local male dogs are attracted.
- Cost effective
  - o The cost of a city license is lower for a spayed female dog than for an intact one.
  - o The cost of spaying is less than the cost of looking after a litter of puppies.

Neutering is the removal of the testicles from your male dog or cat. There are a number of reasons we recommend neutering your pet.

- To reduce the number of unwanted pets.
  - o In every community there are homeless pets that end up in an animal shelter. Many healthy, adoptable cats and dogs sit in shelters waiting for a "forever home" and many end up being euthanized. By neutering our pets, we reduce the number of unwanted dogs and cats in our communities and in our animal shelters.



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- To reduce roaming.
    - o An intact male will do just about anything to find a mate, including digging under a fence or chewing through a door. Once he is free to roam, he risks injury in traffic or in fights with other males.
  - To reduce sexual behaviours.
    - o Intact male dogs are more likely to hump other dogs, stuffed animals and peoples' legs. Un-neutered dogs and cats may mark their territory by spraying strong-smelling urine in the house. Neutering reduces aggressive behaviour. Even if your dog isn't aggressive himself, being intact makes him a target for other intact males who might see him as a potential rival.
  - Health benefits.
    - o Neutering reduces the risk of prostate disorders such as prostate cysts and prostate infections. Neutering prevents testicular cancer. If your pet is cryptorchid (one or both testicles is still inside the body and not in the scrotum), the retained testicle is 14 times as likely to develop a tumor. All cryptorchid pets should be neutered. Neutering also decreases the risk of perineal hernia formation. This is a problem seen most commonly in intact males where there is a weakening of the muscles beside the rectum which can allow the herniation of abdominal contents.
  - Neutering will not make your pet fat.
    - o Lack of exercise and overfeeding will cause your pet to gain weight. Your pet can remain fit and trim as long as you continue to provide exercise and monitor food intake.
  - Neutering is cost effective.
    - o The cost of a neuter is a lot less than the cost of having and caring for a litter. It is also less than the cost of treatment if your tom cat escapes and gets into a fight with a neighbouring cat or if your dog escapes and suffers trauma if he is hit by a car or gets into a fight. Also, the cost of a city licence is less for a neutered dog than it is for an intact dog.