

Benefits of Spaying and Neutering

- They are less inclined to roam or fight.
- They are generally more affectionate.
- Male cats tend to stop spraying.
- Dog license fees are 1/2 the cost.
- Spayed/neutered pets do not get fat and lazy.
- Spaying and neutering can be done as early as four months of age.
- Your female pet can be spayed while in heat or pregnant.
- Your female dog or cat does not need to have "just one litter."

Spay/Neuter General Information

Spaying (ovario-hysterectomy) is the surgical removal of the reproductive organs (ovaries, uterus, fallopian tubes) of the female animal. Neutering (orchectomy or castration) is the surgical removal of the reproductive glands (testes) of the male animal. The outer is left, only the testes are removed. Appearance depends upon the dog's age at the time of the surgery.

Females and males should be spayed or neutered by 6 months of age. Currently some clinics are performing surgeries on animals as young as 8 weeks of age. As this procedure becomes more common, perhaps it will be available in this area. Older animals can be done as long as they are in good health. All sterilization surgery is performed under general anesthesia by a licensed veterinarian.

Female dogs and cats can be spayed when in heat or pregnant. This can usually be done up until a few days before delivery. These surgeries can take longer, and can therefore cost more. Spaying before having a first litter or heat cycle is usually a simpler procedure.

The heat cycle for dogs is once or twice a year starting as early as 6 months of age. Duration is 3 weeks. Heat cycles in cats start as early as 6 months and occur every 3-4 weeks during spring through early fall. The gestation period for both dogs and cats is 63 days. Female cats can become pregnant again as soon as 10 days after giving birth (while still nursing the first litter).

Health Benefits of Spaying and Neutering

Spayed animals no longer feel the need to roam to look for a mate. The result is that they stay home and have less chance of being involved in traumatic accidents such as being hit by a car. They also have a much lower incidence of contracting contagious diseases, and get into fewer fights.

In males, neutering decreases the chances of developing prostatic disease and hernias, and eliminates the chances of developing testicular cancer. It also reduces problems with territorial and sexual aggression, inappropriate urination (spraying) and other undesirable male behaviors.

In Females, spaying decreases the incidence of breast cancer (the rate goes down to almost zero if the spaying is done before the first heat cycle!). It eliminates the chance of developing a serious and potentially fatal infection of the uterus experienced by many mature unspayed animals (pyometra). Spay surgery also eliminates the heat cycle and associated mood swings and undesirable behaviors, messy spotting (in dogs) and the attraction of all available males to your yard.

The simple fact is that spaying and neutering greatly increases the lifespan of your pet and increases quality of life as well!