

Spay and Neuter Information

We recommend that spays and neuters are performed around 6 months of age. However, most animals may be spayed or neutered once they are over 8 weeks of age. Some clients choose to wait until their pet is closer to physical maturity before spaying or neutering their pet. If you have questions about when would be the best time to spay or neuter your pet, one of our veterinarians would be happy to discuss this with you.

Spay:

A spay is a procedure that surgically removes the internal reproductive structures of a female animal. During this procedure, the veterinarian sedates the pet and puts her under general anesthesia. The veterinarian then makes a small incision in the belly area and removes the ovaries, fallopian tubes, and the uterus. The incision is then closed with sutures or surgical glue.

Neuter:

A neuter is a procedure that surgically sterilizes a male animal. During a dog neuter, the veterinarian sedates the dog and puts him under general anesthesia. The veterinarian then makes a small incision in the front (towards the dog's head) of the scrotum. Each testicle is then removed and the blood supply and vas deferens are tied off. The incision is then closed with sutures or surgical glue. During a cat neuter, the veterinarian makes a small incision in the scrotum and over each individual testicle. Each testicle is then removed and the blood supply and vas deferens are tied off. The incision is then allowed to heal without sutures or surgical glue.

How our procedures work:

You will drop off your pet between 8 am and 8:30 am the day of their surgery. A doctor or technician will meet with you to ensure your pet is healthy enough for the procedure and to answer any questions you may have. Your pet will be ready to return home the same afternoon and will be sent home with pain medication to help over the next couple of days. You will also need to keep your pet calm for 7-10 days after the surgery. Special care should be taken to ensure they are not licking the incision as well.

The following are situations you should look out for after a spay or neuter:

- A reopened incision
- Abnormal swelling of the incision area (some swelling is normal)
- Dark red or purple discoloration
- Bloody or thick discharge from the incision
- Foul odors from the incision area, which could indicate an infection
- Continued lethargy, or if your dog doesn't seem to get better after a few days
- Lack of appetite or a decreased interest in water the day after surgery
- Lethargy that persists more than 3-4 days after surgery

Health Benefits of Spaying or Neutering

Some pet owners are not aware of the advantages of spaying or neutering their pet. A spayed or neutered pet does not become fat or lazy. Their metabolism may slow down a bit but all you have to do to keep that trim look is cut back a little on the food. In addition to the obvious advantage of preventing unwanted pregnancies, there are health and behavioral benefits:

- 1) Spaying or neutering is foolproof birth control that lasts a lifetime.
- 2) Spaying or neutering provides relief from such hormone driven urges as:
 - Aggression toward other pets, particularly for males.
 - Territorialism, that is, the tendency to be overprotective of the pet's home ground.
 - Desire to escape from the yard and seek sexual adventure in the outside world.
 - Dominance.
 - Marking territory with urine/feces.
 - Unwanted sexual behavior such as riding, sniffing, licking, arousal.
 - Frustration which occurs when the behaviors dictated by hormonal urges cause the pet to behave in a way that is undesirable to the owners.
- 3) Medical protection (either partial or complete) from such hormone-induced conditions as:

MALES

- Testicular cancer
- Testicular torsion
- Benign prostatic hyperplasia
- Acute and chronic prostatitis, prostatic abscess
- Perianal gland adenomas
- Orchitis (infection of the testicles)
- Venereal tumors
- Perineal hernia (abdominal organs bulging out of rectum)
- Inguinal hernia with potential organ strangulation

FEMALES

- Breast cancer
- Cystic endometrial hyperplasia and pyometra
- False pregnancies
- Mastitis (can occur during false pregnancy)
- Transmissible venereal sarcoma
- Ovarian and uterine tumors
- Cystic ovaries and hyperestrogenism
- Chronic endometritis
- Vaginal hyperplasia and prolapse
- Uterine torsion or uterine prolapse