

SPAYING AND NEUTERING YOUR PET

Sterilizing our pets is an important responsibility we have when owning a dog or cat. There are several important reasons to have our dogs and cats spayed or neutered. Spaying a pet is the term used for females when their ovaries and uterus are removed surgically. These helps to prevent overpopulation, make them more manageable and behave in a more consistent manner, and prevent potential medical problems later in life. The ideal time to spay a dog or cat is four to six months old. This is **before** they go into heat for the first time. This prevents mammary cancer at any time of their life. Dogs go into heat approximately every six months with their first heat starting after 6 months old. Cats are induced ovulators. If a cat is not bred, they will remain in heat for approximately 25 days of each month until they are bred or spayed. An intact dog or cat runs the risk of unwanted pregnancies or other medical problems as they age. As dogs and cats get older, their hormones will change and their risk of getting infections inside their uterus increases. This is a life threatening condition and requires an emergency spay instead of a routine, elective procedure. Mammary cancer is also common in dogs and cats that aren't spayed early in life.

Neutering a pet is when a male is castrated. When a dog or cat is neutered both testicles are removed. This eliminates testosterone from their body and not only treats or prevents behavioral issues but also treats or prevents prostate disease. There are four problems that occur to the prostate (all caused by testosterone). They are Benign Prostatic Hypertrophy (BPH), cysts, abscesses and cancer. BPH, cysts and abscesses can be treated by neutering your dog. All are prevented by early castration. These conditions are rare in cats. Behavioral issues can be aggression or continually trying to get outside to find in heat females.

Having intact animals to breed in a controlled environment and management plan is completely acceptable to meet the need and demand of people who want purebred dogs and cats. Some people enjoy showing dogs or want a certain breed as their pet. As long as this is done responsibly excellent pets can be produced.

If you have any questions regarding spaying or neutering your dog or cat please call 795-9507.