

Have Your Pet Spayed or Neutered

It's the right thing to do.

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Pet overpopulation is a real problem in the United States today that requires responsible breeding and sterilization of non-breeding dogs and cats. Neutering (castration) of males and spaying of females is a very safe, effective, inexpensive, and permanent means of birth control for pets. These procedures are routinely performed in most veterinary hospitals and are well tolerated by the animal.

The only valid reason to avoid neutering or spaying is to breed an animal that has desirable traits. In this instance, the dog or cat should undergo tests to determine if it has evidence of genetic defects that could be passed to offspring. This may involve radiographs and blood work. In addition, the owner has to take the responsibility of breeding, whelping, weaning, vaccinating, obtaining health certificates, and placing the puppies or kittens to loving homes. While breeding your pet can be a rewarding venture, owners should be prepared for the obligations that come with it. All animals should be spayed or neutered when their reproductive career is over.

If you are not going to breed your pet, they should be sterilized before their first heat cycle. While spaying or neutering eliminates the possibility of unwanted pregnancies, there are several medical advantages as well.

Breast cancer occurs more frequently in dogs and cats than people. Spaying before the first heat cycle can virtually eliminate this risk. Spaying between the first and second heat cycles also dramatically decreases the risk. It also eliminates the risk of ovarian or uterine cancer, as well as uterine infections (pyometra).

Neutering your male dog or cat eliminates or reduces the risk of developing testicular cancer, certain prostatic diseases, and perianal tumors. Neutering also makes some behaviors less likely such as urine marking, fighting, and roaming.

There are millions of dogs and cats that are euthanized in the United States each year because they do not have a home. There are also countless others who are ill because of diseases that could have been prevented if they were sterilized. Spaying or neutering your pet is the first step in eliminating these tragedies.