

This low-cost surgery offers you and your pet many advantages.

Peace of Mind

Did you know that a spayed or neutered (sterilized) animal is better behaved?

Males: Neutered cats and dogs focus their attention on their human families. On the other hand, unsterilized, unsupervised males roam in search of a mate, risking injury in traffic and in fights with other males. They mark territory by spraying strong-smelling urine on surfaces. Indoors, male dogs may embarrass you by mounting furniture and human legs when stimulated. Don't confuse aggressiveness with protectiveness; a neutered dog protects his home and family just as well as an unneutered dog, and many aggression problems can be avoided by early neutering.

Females: While their cycles vary greatly, most female cats exhibit the following signs when in heat. For four or five days, every three weeks during breeding season, they yowl and urinate more frequently—sometimes all over the house—advertising for mates. Often, they attract unneutered males who spray urine around the females' homes. Female dogs also attract males from great distances. Female dogs generally have a bloody discharge for about a week, and can conceive for another week or so.

Good Medicine

Did you know that a spayed or neutered animal will live a longer, healthier life?

Spaying a female (removing the ovaries and uterus) or neutering a male (removing the testicles) are veterinary procedures performed under general anesthesia. Both surgeries usually require minimal hospitalization. The ASPCA strongly recommends spaying or neutering your pet as early as possible. Besides preventing unwanted breeding, neutering a male cat or dog before six months of age prevents testicular cancer and prostate disease. Spaying a female cat or dog helps prevent pyometra (a pus-filled uterus) and breast cancer; having this done before the first heat offers the best protection from these diseases. Treatment of pyometra requires hospitalization, intravenous (IV) fluids, antibiotics

and spaying. Breast cancer can be fatal in about 50 percent of female dogs and 90 percent of female cats. For an older, seriously ill animal, anesthesia and surgery are complicated and costly.

Responsible Care

Did you know that you can help prevent the suffering and death of millions of animals?

Almost everyone loves puppies and kittens, but some people lose interest when these animals grow up. As a result, millions of cats and dogs of all ages and breeds are euthanized annually or suffer as strays. Many of these are the result of unwanted, unplanned litters that could have been prevented by spaying or neutering. Rarely surviving for more than a few years on their own, strays die painfully by starvation, disease, freezing or being hit by cars.

Just the Facts, Please

Myth: A female cat or dog should have a litter before she is spayed.

Fact: The sooner you spay your female, the better her health will be in the future. As long as a kitten or puppy weighs more than 2 pounds and is 2 months old, he or she can be neutered or spayed. Many veterinarians practice perfectly safe early sterilization. The longer a female goes unspayed, the greater the likelihood of developing mammary tumors or uterine infections. In fact, a female spayed before her first heat (6 to 9 months of age) has one-seventh the risk of developing mammary cancer as an intact female.

Myth: Spaying or neutering (sterilization) will alter my pet's personality.

Fact: Any slight changes will be positive. Regardless of the age when spayed or neutered, your pet will remain a caring, loving and protective companion. Neutering will reduce the need to breed, and that has a calming effect on many animals. Both neutered male canines and felines tend to stop roaming and fighting, and they also lose the desire to mark their territory with urine.

Myth: Companion animals will become fat and lazy if they are neutered.

Fact: Absolutely not! Lack of exercise and overfeeding make pets fat and lazy—not neutering. Your pet will not gain weight if you provide exercise and monitor food intake. Neutering is good for your pet, since sterilized pets tend to live an average of two to three years longer than unsterilized pets.

Myth: Sterilization is a dangerous and painful surgery for my pet.

Fact: Spaying and neutering are the most common surgeries performed on animals. With a minimal amount of home care, your pet will resume normal behavior in a couple of days.

Myth: Children should witness the miracle of birth.

Fact: Countless books and videos are available to teach your children about birth in a responsible manner. Letting your pet produce offspring that you have no intention of keeping is teaching your children irresponsibility. Anyone who has seen an animal euthanized in a shelter for lack of a home knows the truth behind this dangerous myth.

Many states and counties have established low-cost spay/neuter programs that make the surgery affordable. Many cities also offer reduced licensing fees for owners of spayed and neutered pets. To find a low-cost program near you, call your local humane society or shelter, or call toll-free (800) 248-SPAY. To schedule a low-cost spay/neuter appointment in New York City at Bergh Memorial Animal Hospital, please call (212) 876-7700, ext. 4200, Monday through Friday from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M. If there is no low-cost program in your area and you would like to see one established, contact The ASPCA Government Affairs & Public Policy department at (212) 876-7700, ext. 4550.



The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
National Headquarters • 424 E. 92nd St. • New York, NY 10128-6804 •
(212) 876-7700 • www.asPCA.org
Federal Government Affairs and Public Policy Office •
1755 Massachusetts Avenue, NW • Suite 418 •
Washington, DC 20036 • (202) 232-5020
Midwestern Regional Office • 1717 South Philo Road, Suite 36 •
Urbana, IL 61802 • (217) 337-5030 • www.napcc.asPCA.org