



We recommend:

- All pet cats and female dogs are neutered, unless specifically intended for breeding. Many male dogs also benefit from being neutered
- Neutering before puberty (5 months old) is generally the most advantageous
- Monitoring weight and food intake is important post operatively
- The excellent clinic facilities and drugs used help to make this procedure as stress free as possible for both you and your pet

What is neutering?

Neutering is the surgical removal of the sex organs. In the male, this is called castration, and simply involves removing both testicles. In the female, the operation is commonly called spaying, and both ovaries and the womb are removed.

Why is it good to neuter your male pet?

Some problematic behavioural traits may, in part, be linked to male hormones. These include aggressive, hyper-sexual and territorial behaviour, all of which may be unacceptable in a home environment. Castration of both dogs and cats has been shown to reduce the tendency of animals to exhibit such traits.

Uncastrated male cats tend to spray urine indoors and are also more likely to fight with other cats. Serious wounds may be inflicted, or life threatening diseases (eg Feline Leukaemia, Feline Aids) transmitted.

Neutering

In older dogs, testicular tumours and diseases of the prostate gland are not uncommon. Castration is a valuable preventative measure in these cases.

Why is it good to spay your female pet?

Apart from the obvious advantage of preventing unwanted litters, spaying provides some definite practical and health benefits. Your pet will no longer have seasons (with all the associated management difficulties), future life threatening diseases of the womb (pyometra) will be prevented, and the risk of breast cancer will be very much reduced.

When should the operation be performed?

Neutering cats of both sexes is usually performed before puberty at about 5-6 months of age. Traditionally, spaying bitches was deferred until after their first season. However, more recent evidence suggests this is not necessary, and in fact the risk of breast cancer in bitches spayed before their first season has been shown to be virtually nil. Therefore **we generally recommend spaying bitches at 5 months of age**, although there are breed differences, and we would be happy to discuss these with you further. **Neutering of male dogs is usually performed from 5 months of age onwards.**

Are there any disadvantages of neutering?

Neutering is a surgical procedure and involves an anaesthetic. Hence there are risks. However, in a young healthy animal, using the best available drugs and techniques that are employed at our clinic, these risks are negligible.

Neutered animals have a reduced metabolic rate, and so there is a tendency to put on weight if the same quantity of food is given. However, a slight reduction in food intake should prevent this. We actively recommend periodic weight checks at the clinic to ensure this problem is not developing.

Some spayed bitches can develop urinary incontinence, but this can usually be controlled with medication, and the advantages from neutering far outweigh this possible disadvantage. Again we would be happy to discuss this with you.