

# ELECTIVE SURGERIES

The average lifespan of a neutered pet is 40% longer than an unneutered one. Almost all unsprayed female dogs will eventually develop either mammary tumors (breast cancer) and/or a severe uterine infection, called pyometra, by the time they are 8-10 years old. Female dogs also go through a messy heat cycle two to three times a year. While in heat, they will attract male dogs from the neighborhood – which is why 80% of dogs that are hit by cars are unneutered males.

Along with the aforementioned hit-by-car risk, male dogs roaming the neighborhood have more risk of getting into dog fights and contracting contagious diseases. In their later years, they commonly develop prostate disease, perianal tumors and testicular tumors. Even more sadly, the most common cause of euthanasia of pets in the U.S. is behavior problems. These are usually aggression, running away or urinating in the house by unneutered male dogs.

Keep in mind also that millions of dogs are put to death in the United States each year because there are not enough homes for them all. Spaying and neutering are responsible things to do.

We recommend spaying (surgical removal of the ovaries and uterus) of female dogs and castration (surgical removal of the testicles) of males, for all dogs who will not be used for purebred breeding. For small dogs, this is usually done when the puppy reaches 6 months of age. For larger breeds, the ideal time to spay or neuter varies depending on the risk for hip dysplasia, torn cruciate ligaments and certain kinds of cancer. Early spay or neuter increases risk for certain orthopedic conditions but reduces risk for certain cancers. These risks play out differently depending on the breed and size of your dog.

Spayed and neutered pets are healthier, more bonded to their families, less prone to behavior problems and will not contribute to overpopulation.

While your pet is anesthetized for surgery we can remove any retained baby teeth (common in small breeds), x-ray the hips to screen for hip dysplasia, implant a microchip, perform a stomach tuck to prevent bloat, or repair anatomical defects.

We will contact you when your dog reaches the age to be altered. Female dogs stay overnight after surgery. This is because spaying involves opening up a body cavity – the abdomen. Neuter surgery is not as invasive, so male dogs go home the same day, unless we are doing a stomach tuck procedure as well. Pain and anti-anxiety medications are started ahead of time. There are usually no skin sutures to be removed following surgery but your pet will need to be kept quiet for about two weeks.

