

Let's Talk About Spaying or Neutering Your Pet!

- Spayed and neutered pets are better, more affectionate, companions.
- Neutered cats are less likely to spray and mark territory.
- Spaying a female dog or cat eliminates its heat cycle, which can last twenty-one days, twice a year, in dogs, and anywhere from three to fifteen days, three or more times a year, in cats. Females in heat often cry incessantly, show nervous behavior, and attract unwanted male animals.
- Spayed and neutered dogs and cats live longer, healthier lives.
- Spaying female dogs and cats eliminates the possibility of uterine or ovarian cancer and greatly reduces the incidence of breast cancer.
- Neutering male dogs and cats reduces the incidence of prostate cancer.
- Neutered animals are less likely to roam and fight.
- Prevent a litter - It's Good for the Community! Communities spend millions of dollars to control and eliminate unwanted animals. Irresponsible breeding contributes to the problem of dog bites and attacks. Animal shelters are overburdened with surplus animals.

Health Benefits of Spaying and Neutering

Spayed animals no longer feel the need to roam to look for a mate. The result is that they stay home and have less chance of being involved in traumatic accidents such as being hit by a car. Due to the lack of roaming they have a much lower incidence of contracting contagious diseases, and get into fewer fights.

In males, neutering decreases the chances of developing prostatic disease and hernias, and eliminates the chances of developing testicular cancer. It also reduces problems with territorial and sexual aggression, inappropriate urination (spraying) and other undesirable male behaviors.

In Females, spaying decreases the incidence of breast cancer (the rate goes down to almost zero if the spaying is done before the first heat cycle!). It eliminates the chance of developing a serious and potentially fatal infection of the uterus experienced by many mature unspayed animals (pyometra). Spay surgery also eliminates the heat cycle and associated mood swings and undesirable behaviors, messy spotting (in dogs) and the attraction of all available males to your yard.

Four Good Reasons Why You Should Spay or Neuter Your Pet

1) Spaying or neutering increases your pet's chances for a longer, healthier life.

- Spaying your pet before her first estrous cycle (that is, before she reaches sexual maturity) greatly reduces her chances of developing breast cancer and completely eliminates the threat of uterine and ovarian cancer and uterine infection, which are common occurrences in unaltered females.
- Neutering your male dog or cat prevents testicular tumors and may prevent prostate problems. Neutering also decreases the possibility of perianal tumors and hernias, which are commonly observed in older, unaltered dogs. Because neutered cats are less likely to roam, the threat of abscesses caused by bites and diseases transmitted by fighting are greatly reduced.

2) An altered dog or cat is a better pet for your family.

- Neutered males are less aggressive toward other males and are not distracted by females in heat. Therefore, a neutered male will be less tempted to leave your property and cross that dangerous highway searching for a mate.
- Spaying your female pet eliminates the problem of stray males camping in your yard and decreases her desire to roam and breed.

3) No family wants to cope with an unwanted pregnancy.

Spaying prevents your pet from giving birth to unwanted puppies or kittens. Birthing a litter is not always a stress free event, sometimes resulting in the need for expensive C-section surgery. Then the hassle of finding homes for each of these animals and the expense of spaying/neutering and vaccinating the entire litter.

4) You are helping to alleviate the dog and cat overpopulation problem.

Each year, millions of unwanted dogs and cats are euthanized (killed) at shelters across the country. Although pet behavioral problems are the main reasons animals are given to shelters, many orphans are the result of accidental breeding by free-roaming, unaltered pets. The more pets spayed or neutered, the fewer dogs and cats will have to be destroyed.

Six Common Excuses/Misconceptions for Not Spaying or Neutering Pets

1) My pet will get fat and lazy.

Neutering or spaying may diminish your pet's overall activity level, natural tendency to wander, and hormonal balances, which may influence appetite. Pets that become fat and lazy after being altered usually are overfed and do not get enough exercise.

2) We want another pet just like Rover and Fluffy.

Breeding two purebred animals rarely results in offspring that are exactly like one of the parents. With mixed breeds, it is virtually impossible to have offspring that are exactly like one of the parents.

3) My pet's personality will change.

Any change will be for the better. After being altered, your pet will be less aggressive toward other dogs or cats, have a better personality, and will be less likely to wander. Spraying (urine marking), which is often done by dogs and cats to mark their territory, diminishes or ceases after pets are altered.

4) We can sell puppies or kittens and make money.

Even well-known breeders are fortunate if they break even on raising purebred litters. The cost of raising such a litter -- which includes stud fees, surgical/testing costs, vaccinations and other health care costs, and feeding a quality food -- consumes most of the "profit." Well-known breeders raise breeds that they like. These breeders also try to improve the standard of the breeds they raise.

5) My children should witness our pet giving birth.

Pets often have their litters in the middle of the night or in a place of their own choosing. Because pets need privacy when giving birth, any unnecessary intrusion can cause the mother to become seriously upset. These intrusions can result in an unwillingness to care for the offspring or in injury to the owners or to the pet.

There are many pregnant pets at the shelter that could use a foster situation, so you could provide your child with that experience without adding to the overpopulation problem.

6) I am concerned about my pet undergoing anesthesia.

Placing a pet under anesthesia is a very common concern of owners. Although there is always a slight risk involved, the anesthetics currently used by veterinarians are very safe. Many veterinarians use equipment that monitors heart and respiratory rates during surgery to ensure that their patients are doing well under anesthesia. Thus, the medical benefits of having your pet spayed or neutered far outweigh the slight risk involved with undergoing anesthesia. Consult your veterinarian if you are concerned about this aspect of the procedure.

Community Resources

Organization Name	Contact Info	Services Provided
Rainbow Friends	808-982-5110, mail@rainbowfriends.org	Low cost Spay/Neuter, Rescue
Hawaii Island Humane Society (HIHS)	808-966-5458, keaaui@hihs.org	Low cost Spay/Neuter, Rescue
Good Karma Clinic	808-657-4663, goodkarmaspay.com (Hilo)	Low cost Spay/Neuter
Hui Pono Holoholona	808-968-8279, paws@hphhawaii.org (Mt. View)	Low cost Spay/Neuter
HAKA	808-747-3373, info@808haka.org Link tree: https://linktr.ee/808HAKA (Keaaui)	Low cost Spay/Neuter/Rescue
AdvoCats	808-895-9283, cindy@hawaii.rr.com (Kona/Ocean View)	Free spay/neuter, trap assistance CATS ONLY
PetFIX Ocean View/Hilo	808-990-3548	Free spay/neuter CATS ONLY Low cost spay/neuter for DOGS