

5 MYTHS ABOUT SPAYING AND NEUTERING YOUR PET

- Myth:** My dog or cat will become fat and lazy after being spayed.

Fact: Cats and dogs become fat and lazy because they are being fed too many calories (either in the form of food or as treats) and because they are inactive. It is true that spaying or neutering reduces caloric needs by about 20%, so it is often necessary to feed less after the procedure. However, regardless of reproductive status, the energy needs of your pet will decrease as it matures into an adult. All adult pets (intact or not) should be fed according to their weight and activity levels.
- Myth:** My dog or cat should have one litter before being spayed. She will have a more complete personality and it is good for her body.

Fact: In fact bearing one litter significantly increases your dog or cat's risk of breast cancer (mammary adenocarcinoma). Spaying before the first heat cycle ensures that her risk of breast cancer is near 0%. After the first heat cycle the risk climbs to 7%, and after the second heat cycle the risk climbs to 25%.

Fact: The female reproductive tract is only active for about 3 weeks of the year, so the rest of the time her personality reflects what her personality would be like when she is spayed.

Fact: Pyometra is a life threatening condition that occurs when the intact reproductive system becomes infected. This disease progresses rapidly and can result in death in less than 24 hours after the first symptoms appear. Spaying prevents pyometra.
- Myth:** I don't want my male dog to feel like less of a 'male'.

Fact: Dogs do not have a sexual identity like people do. His basic personality will not change. He will not have emotional or psychological damage from being neutered. Neutered dogs are just as outgoing, friendly, and social as intact male dogs. Some personality traits do change however – these include the need for urine marking, roaming, aggressiveness towards other dogs, and mounting behaviours.

Fact: Intact males are at much higher risk of prostatic disease such as benign prostatic hyperplasia which can lead to difficulty urinating or defecating and prostate infections. Neutering reduces the risk of developing these conditions.

Fact: Intact males are at risk of developing testicular cancer.
- Myth:** I can easily sell or find homes for all puppies and kittens.

Fact: Our shelters are overflowing with unwanted puppies and kittens. One of four shelter dogs is actually a purebred. If you can find homes for the puppies or kittens from your litter then there will be that many fewer homes available for animals at the humane society.

Fact: Even though Fluffy is the best dog (or cat) in the world, the puppies (or kittens) will not be exactly like Fluffy. There are many gorgeous, smart, funny, sweet dogs and cats looking for homes, and sadly many of them die from homelessness.
- Myth:** Spaying and neutering is ridiculously expensive.

Fact: Spaying and neutering costs much less than any other surgical procedure. The cost of a spay or neuter covers medications to premedicate, anesthetize, as well as provide pain control. It also covers extensive monitoring of blood pressure, heart rate, breathing rate, temperature and depth of anesthesia. Finally, we use top quality suture material to ensure maximum safety

and best healing. This is done to ensure that your pet is safe under anesthesia – skimping on any of these things puts your pet’s health at risk.

Fact: Emergency C-sections, a pyometra surgery, or the removal of a cancerous testicle etc., are much more complicated than a simple spay or neuter. They are procedures that are more strenuous for the animal to undergo, as well as being more costly procedures. Young dogs and cats are healthy and are ideal candidates for surgery.