



Halifax Veterinary Center

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WHY SPAY AND NEUTER?

The surgical sterilization of cats and dogs is recommended for a number of reasons. Spaying a female pet eliminates the heat (estrus) cycle, stops the frantic efforts of the pet to get outside and in dogs stops the bloody discharge and scent that draws suitors from blocks away to hang around your home. Most important to your pet, it eliminates the frustration of never being able to mate. Unlike in people, sexual fulfillment is not an emotional need for pets: mating is merely a response to hormones.

Spaying can reduce serious diseases such as pyometra (a life threatening infection of the uterus), mastitis (inflammation of the breast), breast tumors and ovarian cysts and tumors. Neutering a male pet will stop the mating drive, reduces the embarrassing mounting of furniture and people's legs as well as the urge to roam. In male cats, the marking of territory (spraying) is eliminated, as well as the chance of injury due to fighting. Neutered males are 60% less likely to suffer from prostate disorders. Neutering reduces the risk of prostate cancer, and eliminates the possibility of testicular cancer. Many people believe that spaying and neutering will affect their pet's personality but this is just a common myth. Neutering does not make a pet fat and lazy. Overeating and lack of exercise does. Neutered pets may need less calories, so cut down on their meals. Neutering will not make a dog less likely to "defend" his or her turf" if your pet is a good watch dog. In addition, letting a female have a litter first will in no way improve her health or change her personality. If your cats or dogs are playful and energetic they will remain so after spaying or neutering.

We recommend spaying females before their first heat, and neutering males after they are sexually mature but before territorial behavior starts. Surgical sterilization is completed in the same day so your pet can be home with you that same night.