

# SPAY & NEUTER: THE WHEN & WHY



Every year thousands of stray and unwanted animals are euthanized in shelters across the United States. Many of these deaths are the result of simple overpopulation with not enough families to care for pets. Even if you keep a close watch on your pet, accidents happen, and unexpected offspring means more animals that won't be given the chance at full, happy lives. Spaying and neutering can help end this cycle, and both procedures can have health benefits for pets as well. These include eliminating the risk of some cancers, as well as reducing unwanted behaviors such as roaming, spraying, and aggressive or dominant tendencies.

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*Your Lake Pine Veterinarian can help you determine when is the best age to have your pet spayed or neutered, and we'll be happy to answer any questions you may have about the procedure. Please don't hesitate to give us a call at (919) 380-1157.*

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**SPAYING** is the surgical altering of your female dog so she cannot get pregnant. Aside from the very real pet overpopulation problem, there are some valid health reasons for spaying female dogs, including:

- Eliminates the chances of pyometra, an infection of the uterus.
- Decreased risk of mammary cancer.
- Eliminates the risk of ovarian or uterine cancer.

**NEUTERING** is a the surgical altering of a male dog to prevent reproduction, as well as other health benefits throughout their lives.

- Reduction of aggressive, dominant behavior
- Reduces roaming and marking of territory by urinating
- Eliminates the risk of testicular and prostate tumors
- Easier to obedience train



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## Caring for your pet after spay/neuter surgery

Both spaying and neutering are also considered major surgeries, requiring a full two weeks (14 days) of recovery time. This includes:

- Limiting activity. Walk your pet on a leash to eliminate, and keep him or her in a crate or kennel when unsupervised.
- Preventing the pet from licking or biting the incision. Use an e-collar or inflatable collar.
- Keeping the incision dry. No baths during the recovery period.
- Making sure your pet's pain is managed. We will send home medication to help, but call us if your pet appears to be having discomfort.
- Keeping recently neutered males away from unspayed females. They can still impregnate a female for up to 30 days after they are neutered.

## When should I spay or neuter my dog?

There are some newer studies that suggest different time frames for altering pets based on their estimated size when full grown, when they are expected to be fully grown and their specific breed. The following is a general estimate based on size, but will need to be adjusted when other factors such as breed are taken into consideration. Please discuss your individual pet with your Veterinarian to make the best decision for your pet and your family.

- Female <40 pounds full size - spay at 6 months old.
- Female > 40 pounds full size - spay at 10 - 12 months.
- Male < 40 pounds full size - neuter at 6 months old.
- Male > 40 pounds full size - neuter at 12 months.

