

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT SPAYING & NEUTERING

*Today, more people are having their cats spayed and neutered than ever before. Why? Because people who live with cats are discovering the many benefits. This brochure outlines these advantages and answers commonly asked questions about spaying and neutering. If you have other questions, ask your veterinarian.*

### The Benefits of Spaying and Neutering

Contrary to popular belief, spaying or neutering a cat does not make them fat or lazy. Rather, this procedure changes a cat's metabolism. Your cat will require less food, save you on food bills and save you on annual licensing fees. Spayed and neutered cats are cheaper to license!

#### For Those with Female Cats

- Females in heat spray and defecate in inappropriate places, vocalize loudly all hours of the night and day, and often attract noisy, bothersome males.
- Pregnant females eat considerably more both when pregnant and while caring for their offspring.
- Raising kittens is expensive and time consuming. Placing them in good homes involves feeding, worming, vaccinating, advertising and interviewing potential families.

#### For Those with Male Cats

- Neutered male cats are less likely to suffer disorders in their reproductive glands, conditions that can lead to kidney disease.
- Unaltered male cats typically spray urine to mark territory inside and outside the home. This spray has a distinct, obnoxious odor. Neutering at a young age often eliminates this problem.



### Commonly Asked Questions

**I've heard of the pet Overpopulation Problem. What, exactly, is the problem?**

Simply speaking, there are more pets being born than there are homes for them. For this reason, over 10 million dogs and cats in the United States are put to death (euthanized) each year in animal shelters because no one wants them.

The vast majority of animals being destroyed are not old, injured, sick or unfriendly. They are young, attractive, healthy, friendly and playful. No figures exist for the number of animals who die each year due to abandonment, neglect, abuse, starvation or cruelty because they are unwanted. Because of the pet overpopulation problem, care should be taken to prevent pets from breeding. One solution is to spay or neuter your pet.

#### What is spaying and neutering?

Female cats are spayed. Male cats are neutered. Spaying or neutering removes an animal's ability to reproduce. Spaying involves surgical removal of the uterus and ovaries. Neutering involves surgical removal of the testicles. Both operations, done under general anesthesia, are safe, routine and relatively painless. Typically, a spayed or neutered cat is up and about within a day of the operation.

#### What are the benefits of spaying and neutering?

Spayed and neutered pets are less distracted by sexual instincts. They can be more responsive to family members. Spayed and



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neutered pets are less likely to roam the streets and become lost or injured in search of a mate. (Male cats can smell a female in heat over great distances.) Spayed and neutered cats are less likely to fight with other cats, thus saving themselves from injuries and their owners from high veterinary bills.

#### Isn't neutering expensive?

Prices vary, but most veterinarians try to keep charges for



spaying and neutering affordable. Inquire with several veterinarians and spay/neuter clinics. Remember, this one-time cost is minimal compared to the costs of repeated veterinary treatments for male cats injured when roaming or

fighting or the costs of a mother cat's proper health care, including possible cesarean delivery. The costs of raising kittens quickly adds up. Feeding, worming and vaccinating can easily exceed the costs of spaying.

#### How much time does it take to have cat spayed or neutered?

Most clinics and veterinary hospitals will accept your cat during morning hours, and the cat is usually available for pickup later that day or the next day. Finding the time once is easy compared to the time involved in repeated veterinary visits to treat sick or injured unaltered cats, or for caring and finding homes for kittens.

#### Will spaying or neutering change my cat's personality?

The majority of cat owners notice no change in

their cat's personality. If a change is noticed, it is typically that they become more affectionate and attentive.

#### My cat never leaves my yard. Why should I spay or neuter my cat?

Accidents do happen! Interested suitors frequently find a way into the yard. Remember, spayed or neutered cats can be calmer, easier to care for, and more attentive to you. All in all, for you and your cat, spaying or neutering means a much better pet for life and a much better life for your pet.

#### I can find a good home for each kitten in my cat's litter.

Many animals in animal shelters are brought in by owners unable to place them in homes. It's like musical chairs . . . there are just so many chairs. When the music stops, those left out are euthanized.

#### I want my children to experience the miracle of birth.

Public television and your library are two highly informative sources available to teach children about animal reproduction. For millions of cats, however, the "miracle of birth" is closely matched with the increasing number of cats euthanized due to pet overpopulation.

#### I want to breed my purebred pet to make money.

Professional breeding of purebred animals is a science involving years of studying desirable breed characteristics. There is little, if any, money in it for the novice breeder.

#### Is my pet too old for spaying or neutering?

Owners of mature cats can enjoy the benefits too! Cats are safely spayed and neutered every day. Your veterinarian or low-cost spay/ neuter clinic will examine your cat before the operation to determine if any health problems are present.



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