



## THE IMPORTANCE OF SPAYING AND NEUTERING YOUR PETS

There are many reasons why you should spay/neuter your pet and it is an important decision all pet owners should be making. Not only is it beneficial for your personal animals, it is also beneficial for our unowned pet population. Roughly six to eight million dogs and cats come through rescue centers and shelters around the United States each year, and only three to four million of those animals are adopted. The rest are typically euthanized.

PrimeVET Animal Hospital encourages spaying and neutering of dogs and cats to help with overpopulation and for health reasons. Spaying/neutering will not only prevent unwanted pregnancies, but will also give your pet a chance at a longer, healthier life. These surgeries are performed under general anesthesia and by a licensed veterinarian, with the assistance of trained veterinary staff.

A spay is the surgical removal of a female's uterus and ovaries. The removal of these organs makes the female incapable of creating babies. The benefits of fixing dogs and cats outweigh any benefit of not having them fixed. Spaying a female before her first heat drastically reduces her chances of mammary, ovarian, and uterine cancers, which are expensive to treat with poor prognosis. Having a spayed female also removes the possibility of pyometra (also known as a "pyo"). This is an infection of the uterus (womb). It's a common condition in female dogs who haven't been spayed and requires urgent veterinary surgery. Each time a female dog has a season - usually about twice a year - she undergoes all the hormonal changes associated with pregnancy. This is regardless of whether she becomes pregnant or not. The changes in the uterus that occur during each season make infection more likely with age.

Neutering is the removal of the male's testicles. Neutering a male will help with many unwanted behavioral traits including potential aggressiveness (biting/fighting with other animals) later in life, marking inside the home, excessive running away, and it almost eliminates wandering. Neutering a male also decreases the risk of prostate diseases.