



of York County
A New Leash on Life

BROUGHER COMPANION ANIMAL SHELTER
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THE BENEFITS OF SPAYING AND NEUTERING

Spaying refers to the complete ovarian-hysterectomy of a female pet that prevents her from going into heat and becoming pregnant.

Neutering, although the term is not gender specific, refers most commonly to the castration (removal of the testicles) of a male pet that prevents him from impregnating a female.

POPULATION CONTROL

This is by far the biggest benefit of spaying and neutering dogs and cats. Every year, shelters are inundated with far more animals than can be placed into responsible homes. As a result, many are regrettably euthanized due to lack of resources. In addition, feral animals tend to colonize or live in groups, where disease and parasites run rampant. Much time and expense is generally required to rehabilitate these animals, if it's even possible to do so.

BEHAVIORAL MODIFICATION IN MALES

Dogs: Neutering of male dogs curbs aggression towards both humans and other dogs, more so if they're neutered before 8-9 months of age, when puberty generally begins. It also curbs urine marking (leg lifting), mounting behavior, and the tendency to run away in search of in-heat females. If an un-neutered male dog is housed with or near an in-heat female, he may whine, pace, howl, fast, or destroy property for several weeks in a frustrated attempt to reach her.

Cats: Neutering of tom cats greatly curbs their aggression towards other toms, which results in less battle scars and injury. It also curbs their tendency to wander great distances searching and yowling for females. Neutering can virtually eliminate urine spraying, which is the cats' way of marking its territory, whether indoors or outdoors. The strong, pungent odor of tomcat urine is also greatly reduced by neutering.

BEHAVIORAL/PHYSICAL MODIFICATION IN FEMALES

Dogs: Spaying of female dogs prevents their going into heat. During this time, a dog's vulva becomes enlarged and she can spot blood for up to two weeks or more. She may also dribble urine, depending on the degree of swelling. If she is not bred, she may go into what's called a "false pregnancy" approximately two months after her heat cycle begins. In this condition, her nipples enlarge and produce milk. She may also engage in a destructive nesting behavior or carry around a particular toy as if it were her puppy, sometimes becoming protective over it.

Cats: Unlike humans and most other animals, female cats are induced ovulators. This means they won't ovulate unless they're bred. As a result, they come into heat every few weeks during their season, generally March through October. An in-heat female is very vocal and will chirp and yowl, sometimes incessantly. She often assumes a rocking side-to-side stance with her forelimbs flat on the ground and her hind end raised in the air.

PREVENTION OF DISEASE

Spayed female dogs and cats are less likely to develop mammary gland tumors and of course, are spared entirely from potentially deadly uterine infections. Neutered male dogs will not develop tumors of the testicles or prostate gland. Neutered male cats, since they fight less with other cats, are less likely to develop abscesses or contract FIV (Feline AIDS Virus).

COMMON MYTHS

Spaying or neutering a dog will not calm it down! If a dog is energetic or hyperactive prior to surgery, it will remain so after it's been altered.

A spayed or neutered animal will not become fat and lazy! Weight gain is a result of taking in more calories than what is burned off.