



Park Veterinary Centre

256 Cassiobury Drive. Watford. Herts. WD17 3PA
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NEUTERING – DOGS

There are many pros and cons of having your pet neutered. This information sheet is to help you make an informed decision regarding neutering and whether it is right for your pet. If you have any more questions you can discuss them with a vet or Carol, our pet health/behaviour counsellor.

Male dogs

Having a male dog neutered (castrated) involves a general anaesthetic and the removal of both testicles. Advantages can be a decrease in sexual behaviour (mounting & territorial urine marking), less inclination to roam and the more obvious advantage of preventing unwanted puppies if he lives with an un-neutered bitch. Castration also reduces the risk of various health problems in later life including diseases of the prostate and testicles, anal disease and some hernias. Castration is unlikely to have any beneficial effect on problems related to being left alone, house-training problems, or general boisterousness.

Castration may not be advisable in very nervous dogs nor in some cases of aggression. In these cases please discuss with Carol first. Castrated male dogs have a tendency to put on weight and it is important to monitor this and cut down on food intake if necessary. In addition some dogs experience a change in coat condition or slight changes in character.

We recommend waiting until your dog is a year old before having him castrated, although in certain circumstances it can be done earlier.

Female dogs

The argument for having a female dog neutered (spayed) at an early age is strong. Spaying involves a general anaesthetic and removal of both ovaries and the womb (uterus). If it is carried out before the second season there is a greatly reduced risk of mammary (breast) cancer developing later in life. It also prevents the development of womb infections that are common in unspeyed bitches and can be fatal, often requiring emergency surgery. Other advantages are the prevention of ovarian and uterine cancers and false pregnancies, and better control of diabetes mellitus.

Like castrated dogs, spayed bitches are also prone to weight gain, but this is prevented if care is taken with feeding. Coat changes can occur, and there may be a slightly increased risk of urinary incontinence in spayed bitches (although this usually responds to medical treatment).

We recommend spaying 17 weeks after the first day of a season, normally the first season. The timing of this is important due to hormonal factors. In some circumstances we will spay a bitch before her first season – please discuss this with a vet first.

All anaesthetics and surgical procedures carry some risks. If you have any further questions please feel free to ask a member of staff.

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