



Spaying and Neutering are very important procedures to have done for your pets for many reasons, including their future health, behavior issues and controlling the pet population.

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There are not enough homes for all of the pets

What is a spay? What is a neuter?

Why are they important to have done for my pet?

Spaying and Neutering are very important procedures to have done for your pets for many reasons, including their future health, behavior issues and controlling the pet population.

Spaying is actually performing an ovariectomy on a female animal. When we spay a pet, her entire reproductive tract is removed, which includes her ovaries and uterus. She will have an incision in her abdomen which will be closed with sutures or surgical staples. If she is in heat or pregnant, it is a more difficult procedure and is more time-consuming and risky. Her reproductive tract is more vascular and the blood vessels are engorged with blood. By spaying a pet, you drastically reduce or eliminate the potential for related health problems such as mammary cancer (breast cancer), pyometras (uterine infections) or uterine/ovarian cancers. By spaying your pet you also avoid having to deal with them coming into heat. Dogs typically come into heat every 6 months and cats can stay in heat continuously unless they become pregnant.

Neutering a male animal is a castration surgery. The doctor makes a skin incision and removes the testicles. After surgery, he will have a small incision and the doctors normally do not place external sutures. All of the sutures are placed under the skin and they are absorbable, so there is no need to return for suture removal. Some male animals have a situation in which both testicles are not in their proper location. This is called "cryptorchid". Common terminology describes this condition as, "The testicles have not dropped". There are two types of cryptorchid conditions: Inguinal and Abdominal. Inguinal cryptorchid means that the testicle(s) have not dropped into the scrotum, but can be palpated in the inguinal (groin) area. Abdominal cryptorchid means that the testicles are still in the abdomen. These surgeries require some exploration into the inguinal or abdominal region to locate and remove the testicle(s). These are more difficult and time-consuming surgeries. By neutering a male animal you drastically reduce or eliminate the potential for health problems such as prostate disease, perianal tumors and testicular cancer. You also reduce a male animals' behavioral issues that go along with being unneutered, such as marking their territory by urinating in inappropriate places, running away (to find the ladies!) and sometimes aggression problems.

It is also important to spay and neuter your pets because there is such a huge problem with unwanted pets in the United States and in our community in particular. You may not think that any of those cute baby kittens or puppies you see would ever end up at a shelter, but every year it is estimated that between 6-8 million pets end up in shelters and unfortunately, between 3-4 million have to be euthanized because there are not enough homes for them and there is physically not enough space in the shelters. In South Carolina, over 100,000 pets have to be euthanized in shelters each year. In our immediate area, there are over 140,000 free-roaming cats in Horry County and another 47,000 in Georgetown County. One unspayed female cat, through her offspring can result in 400,000 kittens within 7 years! We have almost 200,000 cats roaming our communities! Just think of that potential population - it is almost unimaginable. We absolutely advocate spaying and neutering so that pets can have happy, healthy lives!