

NEUTERING YOUR CAT

Why do you recommend that I have my cat neutered?

Neutering is very beneficial to the health of your cat, especially if performed at an early age.

Benefits of neutering include:

- **Prevention of Marking:** Following puberty, which occurs at approximately eight to nine months of age, the male cat will become territorial and start to mark areas, even inside the house, by spraying urine. This urine has a particularly offensive odor and is difficult to remove. As the tomcat reaches sexual maturity, he will start to enlarge his territory, straying ever farther from the house, particularly at night. **It is for this reason that many of the cats that are hit by automobiles are non-neutered males.**
- **Decrease in Fighting:** Diseases such as FIV and FeLV, which can cause AIDS-like syndromes and cancers in cats, are spread through cat bites. By increasing the size of his territory, he increases the likelihood that he will come into contact with other cats and will get into fights for territorial dominance. Inflicted fight wounds can result in severe infections and abscesses.
- **Pet Overpopulation:** In addition to these benefits, an important issue is that millions of kittens and cats are destroyed annually at animal shelters across the United States due to pet overpopulation. Neutering your cat prevents unwanted litters and ensures that you are doing your part to help reduce pet overpopulation.



Does neutering lead to any adverse effects on health or behavior?

There are many misconceptions about the effects of neutering on health and behavior. Neutered males are no more likely to become fat or lazy provided they receive a proper diet and adequate exercise. With less roaming, fighting, and mating, calorie intake may have to be reduced and alternative forms of play and activity provided. Behaviors that have developed independent of hormonal influences such as hunting are not affected by neutering.

When should the procedure be performed?

We recommend neutering your pet between four and six months of age. Research reveals that neutering at an early age does not cause any increased risk, and the longer a tomcat sprays and fights, the less likely neutering will stop these behaviors.

Are there any dangers associated with the procedure?

With modern anesthetics and monitoring equipment, the risk of complication from a neuter procedure is very low.



Routine and Urgent Veterinary Care
for Dogs, Cats and Exotic Pets

Accredited Practice, American Animal Hospital Association

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My cat has retained testicles - what does this mean?

In males both testicles descend prior to birth from inside the abdominal cavity through the inguinal canal into the scrotal sac. In some cats one or both testicles do not descend fully into the sac and may either remain in the abdomen or anywhere along the inguinal canal path to the scrotal sac. These cats are called cryptorchid and a more extensive surgery will be required to locate the testicles and remove them. If these testicles are not removed they will continue to produce hormones and the behavior problems associated with intact male cats.

How should I prepare my pet for the procedure?

Do not allow your pet to eat after 10pm the night before surgery. You may leave water available, but only in small amounts. In most cases your pet's doctor will advise you to administer any regular medications as you usually would. Check with your pet's doctor if you have specific questions regarding medications the morning of surgery.

What happens during this procedure?

When you bring in your pet on the day of his neuter, you will meet with an admit technician who will review your estimate with you and go over any preferences or questions you may have before you drop him off. A deposit will be taken, and you will need to fill out some forms. The admit technician will explain that once your pet is brought back to the Treatment area, their Pre-Op will begin. A Pre-anesthetic exam will be performed by their doctor, and pre-anesthetic bloodwork will be drawn and run in our in-house laboratory. Pre-anesthetic bloodwork is important to ensure that your pet is healthy enough to undergo anesthesia and that their body will be able to process the anesthetic agents properly. If everything is acceptable, your pet will then be anesthetized. After your pet is anesthetized, a breathing tube will be placed in his trachea or windpipe. This will allow the delivery of oxygen and the gas anesthetic directly into the lungs. The surgery consists of an incision being made over each side of the scrotal sac so that each testicle can be excised. It usually takes about 20-30 minutes, and external sutures are not generally required. Vasectomies are not performed in cats. It is both sterilization and removal of the male hormones that provide the behavioral benefits.

How soon can my pet go home after his neuter?

Your pet will need 3-4 hours to recover here at the hospital following their surgery. The technician or the doctor will call you to let you know that the procedure is finished and that your pet is in recovery, and they will schedule a discharge appointment time for you to come in and meet with our discharge technician.

The discharge technician will review the instructions from the doctor about aftercare, go over any medications that have been prescribed, and answer any additional questions you may have.



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What is the approximate cost?

Under age 5	Over age 5
\$210	\$250

This includes the Preanesthetic Exam, Preanesthetic Bloodwork, Anesthesia, the Neuter Surgery, E-Collar to go home, and a Complementary Toe Nail Trim.

Are there any post-operative precautions I should take?

After undergoing anesthesia, your pet will probably still be a little tired for the rest of the day. You should keep him quiet and confined, and keep him away from things like pools, decks, and stairs for the remainder of the day. It is important to allow him to rest quietly, away from other pets and small children.

After your pet has settled in at home for about 30 minutes or so, you can offer small amounts of water. If no vomiting occurs for 30 minutes after that, then small amounts of food may be given. If any vomiting occurs, withhold food until the next day, but leave water available.

Although the incision is the only evidence of surgery you can see, your pet is healing on the inside as well, and even if he isn't showing any signs of pain or discomfort, it is important to keep his activity restricted. This means no running, jumping, or climbing stairs, and no activity that induces excitement. You may want to restrict him to a portion of the house to help keep him calm.

If you are having trouble keeping your pet calm, please call to discuss options with the doctor. They may prescribe some sedatives to ensure the healing process is allowed to continue.

You will also need to ensure that your pet cannot chew or lick at his incision site. Even if the sutures remain intact, an infection could develop if your pet is allowed to chew or lick the site. There are various aids you may need to use in keeping your pet away from their incision site:

- Elizabethan Collar (E-Collar)
- Bite-not collar
- Inflatable collar
- T-shirt

Inspect the incision every day and call us if you see any redness, swelling, or discharge. These could be signs of infection, and require medical attention. Too much activity can cause an infection at the incision site.

If you are concerned or have any questions, please call us anytime at (925) 866-8387.