

## **Neutering**

We recommend that if you do not plan to breed from your pet that you should have him or her neutered. This is a surgical operation. Castration of males is removal of their testicles. Spaying of females is removal of their ovaries and uterus or ovaries alone depending on the technique used. The surgery is performed under general anaesthesia and all of our patients are given post-operative pain relief. In all pets these operations are advised to help prevent unwanted pregnancies.

You can usually expect to bring your pet to us in the morning and have them home to you that same afternoon or evening. Any sutures are removed after 10 days.

### **Why should I neuter my dog?**

Bitches which are not spayed are at risk of womb infections which can be fatal in later life. If you spay your bitch before her 2nd season it drastically reduces the chance of her developing mammary cancer which is the commonest form of cancer in female dogs.

If your bitch is spayed she will not come into season and neither will she develop false pregnancies.

Castrated dogs cannot develop testicular tumours and are much less likely to develop prostatic disease. They are also much less likely to develop some other cancers and castration reduces the chance of certain hernias developing. These can be a serious worry in older dogs and many owners wish they had acted to prevent these in younger life.

Dogs which are not castrated are much more likely to roam, become aggressive and generally do not make such good pets. A 4-6 month old puppy has an amiable nature as it has not been exposed to the male hormone, testosterone. If you have him castrated at 6 months of age, this can ensure that he retains those pleasing characteristics, rather than becoming more dominant, and perhaps aggressive.

### **Why should I neuter my cat?**

Having your female cat neutered prevents unwanted pregnancy. Cats generally are allowed out and will very easily fall pregnant if not neutered.

Castrating your male cat around 6 months of age helps prevent him from spray marking your house and garden with foul-smelling urine. Also, it will stop him wanting to roam so far and reduce the chance of him getting into fights. Cats which are not castrated often have cat bite abscesses every few weeks from the fights they get into. They are also at risk of catching serious viral diseases from other cats.

### **Why should I neuter my rabbit?**

Female rabbits should be neutered to prevent tumours of their wombs. Virtually all domestic rabbits will develop these cancers by the age of 7 or 8 if they are not neutered. Spaying them also helps reduce behavioural problems due to false pregnancies.

Male rabbits should be castrated to prevent aggression and urine spraying. Also, it reduces their tendency to mount other pets.

### **Why should I neuter my reptile?**

Many captive female reptiles will develop egg stasis which results in inappetence and can be fatal. Removal of the oviduct and ovaries prevents this and should be considered if you are not planning to breed reptiles such as iguanas, bearded dragons and water dragons.

Some captive male lizards will become aggressive to their companions or to their handlers if not castrated. Castration does not always prevent this but is worth considering as it can make them much happier in a captive environment.