



## WHY neuter...print off sheet

### Personal & Social reasons affecting your dog

#### Personal Reasons for neutering your dog

YES! It is important.

- It will prevent unwanted litters of puppies; any off lead dog is at risk.
- Reduces antisocial behaviour
- Prevents huge vet bills and loss of life via common diseases and infections.

**My male dog** may be castrated from 6 months onwards.

#### Advantages

- **Off spring** - prevents unwanted matings; any dog off lead is at risk.
- **Focused sexual behaviours** - can reduce behavioural problems such as aggression, urine marking, libido and straying from home.
- **Cancer- Testicular & Prostate** - totally removes the risk.
- **Calmer disposition** - helps reduce behaviour problems but will not affect the basic character of your pet!
- **Retained testicles.** In some dogs one or both testicles fails to descend Retained testicles (monorchid and cryptorchid) have a high risk of becoming cancerous and need castrated.

#### Disadvantages

- **Minimal Weight gain:** - Castrated dogs can sometimes put on weight after the operation, the reason is that the operation slows the animal's metabolic rate. If you feed the animal at the same rate as before then the surplus energy will be converted to fat. The solution is to keep a careful check of their weight and reduce quantity of it's diet accordingly.
- **Surgical risk:** - Like all operations be aware that there is a very small element of risk. Thankfully we find that complications are very rare.

**My female dog** can be neuter at 6month pre- first season or 2 months post first season

Seasonal facts: Bitches first season comes at 6-9 months (relative to size) and the season lasts about 23 days from first bleeding. They become MOST fertile when the bleeding stops hence so many accidental litters as people feel at that point the season has ended. First signs are swelling of the vulva, first day is commencement of bleeding though all you may notice is she is licking herself excessively 8-13 days on average (extremely variable) and the bitch will become attractive to male dogs but often rejects dogs at this stage. Then the discharge becomes clearer, she will stand to be mated and she is truly in season. Again this stage is very variable but she will be fertile up to the 23<sup>rd</sup> day from commencement of the bleeding stage. Some can be mated and conceive whilst they are bleeding. Seasons occur every 6 months dogs do not have menopause and will conceive at a very old age. They shouldn't spayed whilst they are in season or during a false pregnancy unless they are presenting with pyometra which is life threatening.

#### Advantages

- **Freer lifestyle** Avoidance of unwanted puppies, the mess, risk of losing your dog with complications and inconvenience of the bitch coming into season.
- **Influence on male dog s** Male dogs hanging about making a nuisance, even if they are neutered...they will still actively mate and have all the same feelings and drives.
- **False Pregnancy:** - This is quite common, a normal part of the female dog's reproductive cycle and occurs a few weeks after the end of the season. Not all bitches show the same symptoms and some are worse than others but an affected bitch may be depressed, not want to eat, may show anxiety, or strange behaviour such as bed making or carrying objects such as toys about as if they were puppies. Spayed bitches do not get false pregnancies.

- **Breast Cancer:** - Mammary tumours in unneutered bitches is significantly higher than in spayed dogs. Spayed before her first season she will almost certainly never develop mammary cancer. Many canine mammary cancers are malignant and often will have already spread by the time they are detected. The surgery involved can be extensive and common in unspayed bitches.
- **Pyometra (Womb infection):** - A significant % of unspayed bitches develop pyometra in later life. The womb becomes infected and full of pus with very few symptoms. This infection is very serious and rarely detected before it is too late and is often fatal. To spay is to remove the womb and ovaries.

#### Disadvantages

- **Minimal Weight gain:** - Spaying slows the animal's metabolic rate. If you feed them at the same as before then the surplus energy will be converted to fat. So remedied by monitoring their weight and reduce its diet accordingly.
- **Urinary incontinence:** - A very small percentage of mainly large spayed bitches may become incontinent in later life. There are some very good drugs to control the situation.
- **Surgical risk:** - The operation is an ovario-hysterectomy, i.e. removal of the womb and ovaries. This is a fairly major operation and like all operations are aware there is a very small element of risk. Thankfully complications are very rare.

### Neutering...Just do it! Your dog is safer with it having been done

You need to go to your vet for a **pre-op check**. The night before the op. you will be asked **not to feed** him/her after 10.00pm and to remove their water access first thing in the morning. This is important as a full stomach increases the risk of your pet being sick when coming round from the anaesthetic, which can be dangerous. You will be asked to bring your pet to the surgery between **8.30 and 9am** on the morning of the operation. You will be asked to read and **sign a consent form**. Please read this carefully and ask about anything you are not sure about. Your pet can be **microchipped** whilst under anaesthetic. If your pet has shown any signs of being unwell in the recent past or has any allergies to medication, then please bring this to the vet's attention. A nurse will then take your pet through to the hospital area where he/she will be weighed and given a pre-med injection. This reduces any anxiety and allows a smoother transition into and out of anaesthesia, as well as providing postoperative pain relief. Your pet is then bedded down in kennels until ready for the operation. A short acting anaesthetic is administered by injection into a vein in the leg, which causes them to fall asleep within a few seconds. A tube is then placed into the animal's airway and connected to an anaesthetic machine that keeps him/her asleep on a gaseous anaesthetic for the duration of the operation. A nurse monitors the anaesthetic throughout the operation. Once the operation is over your pet is kept on oxygen until he/she starts to wake up, which takes only a few minutes. Your pet will be given a pain relieving injection and returned to kennels where he/she is given a comfy bed and monitored until fully conscious.

Pets are routinely allowed home the same day. Your pet may be sent home with a collar to prevent them from interfering with the wound. They need to attend a 2-3 and then 10-14 days day check up following surgery. There are no extra charges for these check-ups.

## Global reasons for neutering your dog

**Your example** to others who you know are vulnerable to breed from their dog. You can't preach to them explaining the huge number of dogs being killed in council pounds for want of a rescue place or their home

**Uncertainty of the future** We live in an unstable society- tragedy strikes without notice and your dog may find they are suddenly being passed on and an unneutered dog is far more likely to be exploited than a neutered pet.

**Dogs are luxury items** Fewer people own dogs now as our lifestyle doesn't allow for a dependent long working hours; foreign holidays; general population scared of dogs and ready to sue at the slightest event. There are fewer suitable homes and many many more dogs than there are good homes available. Why breed and take those homes from a possible rescue dog who for good reasons its family can no longer care.

**You can't help the homeless** Either foster or homing a neutered or unneutered homeless dog if your dog isn't neutered. It is not fair on that dog as their behaviours are far more sexually driven and affected.