

Neutering Your Pet

What is neutering?

Neutering (castration), technically called **orchidectomy**, is the surgical removal of a male's testicles.

What are the advantages of neutering my pet?

1. **Preventing pet over-population:** Every year, more than 10 million dogs and cats must be put to death in this country because no one wants them. It is estimated that in seven years, one female and her offspring can produce 42,000 kittens. The Numbers are similar for dogs. It takes time, money and effort to raise a litter of puppies or kittens and then find good homes for them. Just because your pet is a purebred, don't assume its offspring won't end up in a shelter or be abandoned. It happens quite regularly.
2. **Preventing prostate disease:** Benign prostatic hyperplasia, prostatitis and prostatic abscesses are some examples of common diseases seen in uncastrated dogs. Cancer of the prostate is rare in dogs. Unfortunately, castration status appears to have no sparing effect with cancer. Cats do have prostate glands, but feline prostatic disease is extremely rare for unknown reasons.
3. **Preventing testicular diseases:** Infection, cancer, immune –mediated diseases and granulomas can occur in animals that are not castrated.
4. **Preventing perineal area diseases** (area surrounding the anus): Perineal hernias occur when the muscles surrounding the rectal wall become weak. While the exact cause is unknown, male hormones appear to play a role for this reason it is extremely rare in dogs that are neutered. This disease rarely occurs in cats. Growths around the anal area,

benign and cancerous, usually occur in older, intact dogs. Treatment usually involves castration and excision of the mass. This is in addition to costly chemotherapy and or radiation therapy that may need to be done to keep the cancer in check. Chemotherapy and radiation therapy will run between \$3000 and \$7000. Castration before cancers form is a great deal cheaper, and you get to keep the rest of that money in the bank earning interest.

5. **Reducing objectionable behavior:** Castration can help reduce roaming behavior, aggressive behavior, urine spraying and fighting. Unneutered male cats are more likely than neutered cats to spray urine on vertical objects as a means of marking their territory. Castrating an animal prior to puberty (5 to 6 months of age) is best and will reduce the incidence of objectionable behaviors developing. If an animal is exhibiting such behavior, castration will be only part of the treatment. Behavior modification and training is also indicated, but even with these other treatments there may never be a 100% resolution of the problem.

What are the disadvantages of castrating my pet?

Your pet will be permanently unable to reproduce.