

Neutering Your Dogs

Neutering Your Dog: What You Need to Know

Neutering is a routine veterinary procedure that prevents dogs from breeding, and it also offers several health benefits for both male and female dogs. Here's an overview of what neutering involves, how it works, and the benefits it can offer both your dog and you.



What Is Neutering?

Neutering refers to the surgical procedure that prevents dogs from reproducing:

- **Castration** (for male dogs): The vet removes both testicles, eliminating the main source of testosterone and the ability to breed.
- **Spaying** (for female dogs): The vet removes the ovaries and, in most cases, the uterus, preventing pregnancy.

For male dogs, there's also a temporary option through hormone-implant treatments, which stop breeding for six to 12 months.



The Neutering Procedure

Before Surgery

Before neutering, your vet will provide instructions, such as withholding food for several hours before the procedure. If your dog has been unwell recently, inform your vet to ensure they are fit for surgery.

During Surgery

- **Castration:** A small incision is made to remove the testicles.
- **Spaying:** An incision is made in the abdomen to remove the ovaries (and usually the uterus).

Some vets offer **keyhole spaying** (laparoscopic surgery), which involves smaller incisions and quicker recovery but may be more expensive.



After Surgery

Post-surgery, your dog will be monitored until they are ready to go home. They might feel groggy as the anaesthetic wears off, which can take a day. Recovery requires careful monitoring:

- Ensure your dog rests and avoids running or jumping.
- Use a cone or body suit to prevent licking the incision site.
- Administer any prescribed medications and attend follow-up appointments if needed.

Benefits of Neutering

Health Benefits for Dogs

- **Male dogs:** Neutering reduces the risk of prostate diseases and eliminates the possibility of testicular cancer.
- **Female dogs:** Spaying significantly reduces the risk of mammary cancer and completely eliminates the risk of pyometra, a potentially fatal uterine infection. Early spaying further decreases the risk of these diseases.



Practical Benefits for Owners

- **Cost savings:** Neutering prevents pregnancy and the potential expenses of complications and caring for puppies.
- **Mess and behaviour:** Female dogs in heat produce a bloody discharge and may exhibit behavioural changes, while unneutered males may show increased roaming or aggression.

Recovery and Follow-Up



Most dogs recover quickly after neutering. However, complications can arise if they are too active or if the wound isn't properly cared for. Be sure to follow your vet's instructions carefully and contact them if you have any concerns about your dog's recovery.

FAQs About Neutering

- **Cost:** The cost varies by dog size, gender, and any specific conditions (e.g., retained testicles in males). Larger dogs generally cost more due to higher anaesthetic requirements and longer surgery times.
- **Is it right for your dog?** Discuss with your vet the potential health benefits, risks, and timing for neutering your dog based on their unique health profile and breed.

By neutering your dog, you not only help prevent unwanted puppies but also promote their long-term health and well-being.