



Castration/Spaying and your dog



Castration and your dog

What is castration and when should it be done?

Castration is the surgical removal of the testicles and is carried out in a minor operation under general anaesthetic. Usually a dog is admitted to the clinic in the morning and collected later the same day. He may have several stitches, which will be removed after approximately 10 days. Commonly this operation is referred to as 'neutering' and can be carried out from 5 months onwards.

What are the main reasons for neutering dogs?

Responsible ownership, relating to population control. Thousands of unwanted dogs and puppies are destroyed each year, many from litters born as a result of accidental matings.

Medical/Health reasons

Veterinary surgeons may recommend castration for several medical conditions including testicular tumours, enlargement of the prostate, certain types of anal tumours and cryptorchidism (retained testicles). If the testes have not descended into the scrotum by 10 months of age they are unlikely to do so, and are more prone to tumours in later years.

Behavioural problems

As puppies reach puberty at 6-7 months of age, the owner may notice a change in the dog's behaviour. The first sign is often a lack of obedience, leading to aggression with other dogs and even fights. Other signs include:

- Possessiveness over toys, food, etc.
- Territorial behaviour towards visitors.
- Aggression towards other animals/people in the household.
- Roaming: the dog may become an escapologist in order to find receptive females i.e. slipping leads, escaping through fences, etc. This increases the risk of road accidents if the dog is roaming unaccompanied.



This unsociable behaviour can be prevented or subdued by castration at 5-7 months of age.

Will castration work?

Research shows that following castration, changes in behaviour takes varied times. Of the individuals that are likely to respond, some will do so within 2 weeks, the remainder will respond within 6 months.

Will castration cause my dog to put on weight?

No. After castration dogs can have an increased appetite leading the owner to give more food. In this case the weight increase is due to overfeeding, not castration. Reducing the diet at the first sign of weight increase will prevent problems. A weight check 2 months after castration is recommended and any dietary adjustments can be made then.

Unless you want to use a male dog for breeding purposes, there are few advantages and a lot of disadvantages to keeping an entire male.

A castrated dog has fewer medical problems, lives longer on average, does not add to the pet overpopulation and makes a more loyal, loving and rewarding pet.

Spaying and your dog

What is spaying and when should it be done?

Spaying is the surgical removal of the ovaries and uterus commonly referred to as 'neutering'. Performed as a routine operation under general anaesthetic, the patient is usually admitted in the morning and is collected later the same day. We recommend spaying dogs at 6 months, before their first season. If your dog has already had a season we recommend spaying them 2-3 months after their latest season, but please ask one of the staff for further details.



Why are female dogs spayed?

The primary reason for spaying is to prevent unwanted puppies. Other benefits include:

- Spayed bitches (especially if spayed before their first season) are over 100 times less likely to develop mammary tumours.
- Exercise - a spayed bitch can be exercised off the lead in safety, whereas an un-neutered bitch in season will attract male dogs in the area. This can result in mis-mating and fights, so the bitch must be kept on a lead at all times.
- Un-neutered bitches come into season once or twice a year and produce a bloody discharge that can stain the animal's coat or your carpets and furniture!
- Spayed bitches are healthier and will have fewer problems such as pyometra (a life threatening infection of the womb), false pregnancies, mammary tumours etc.

However there can be disadvantages:

- Spay incontinence - a small percentage of bitches spayed may 'leak' a little urine following surgery. A simple treatment is available for this problem which only occurs in a very small percentage of bitches spayed.
- Weight - spayed bitches have a reduced metabolic rate so they need less food. If their diet is altered after surgery there will be no weight increase. Clients are advised to check their dog's weight 2 months after surgery when dietary advice can be given if necessary.

Unless you want to use a female dog for breeding purposes, the advantages far outweigh the disadvantages of having your dog spayed.

A spayed dog has fewer medical problems, lives longer on average, does not add to the pet overpopulation and makes a more loyal, loving and rewarding pet.

For further information please ask at reception.