

The Facts About Spay/Neuter

Each day 10,000 humans are born in the U.S. - and each day 70,000 puppies and kittens are born. As long as these birth rates exist, there will never be enough homes for all the animals. As a result, millions of healthy, loving cats, dogs, kittens and puppies face early deaths as a form of animal control. Others are left to fend for themselves against automobiles, the elements, animals and cruel humans.

What can you do to stop the suffering?

Spay and neuter your pet! Cats and Dogs Multiply fast. They first go into heat at 5 months of age - sometimes earlier, and they can have litters twice a year! That is why there are so many homeless. An unspayed female cat, her mate and all of their offspring, producing 2 litters per year, with 2.8 surviving kittens per litter can total:

1 year:12
2 years:67
3 years:376
4 years:2,107
5 years:11,801
6 years:66,088
7 years:370,092
8 years:2,072,514
9 years:11,606,077

Doesn't everyone get their cats spayed and neutered?

No. There are millions of healthy cats and kittens put to death each year in U.S. animal shelters because of unaltered cats and not enough homes for their offspring. Some people don't know this, or they don't recognize this is related to themselves or their cats.

People put off spay/neuter due to issues of money, transportation, or time. Some people believe it's more fair to allow the cat to mate "just this once" -- or they think a female cat's pregnancy and kittens will be sweet or educational for their human children. Also, some people don't know that:

- Cats can start mating as early as six months.
- Even indoor-only house cats often find ways to get outdoors when the sexual urge hits them. Whether they disappear for good (due to panic, accidents, or enemies) or they return home, kittens are the result.
- An unaltered male cat can father hundreds of kittens a year.
- Statistically, even if a person finds good homes for his cat's kittens, some of the kittens will grow up and produce litters of kittens.
- Spaying a female before her first heat protects her from risks of uterine, ovarian, and mammary cancers.
- Spaying also protects her from the stresses of pregnancy.
- Spaying stops her frantic interest to roam outdoors and reduces the chances she'll mark your home with urine when she's in heat.
- Unaltered cats have urges that make them irritable and upset. They yowl or whine non-stop, fight, or destroy objects in the house.
- Neutering a male reduces his risk of prostate problems, including cancer, later in life.
- Neutering lowers his urge to roam and to fight, and thus lowers chances of disease transmission and woundings.
- Neutering also reduces his tendency to spray in the home.
- Neutering eliminates the powerful odor of adult male cat urine.

Early-age Spay/Neuter

Some people delay spay/neuter for their pet because they've heard the animal must be six months or older. Although many older veterinarians were taught that, a number of studies show that cats and dogs as young as eight weeks have no problems later in life due to early-age spay/neuter. Plus, young kittens bounce back faster from the procedures than older kittens or cats. The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) endorses early-age spay and neuter.

