



## WHAT IS SPAY AND NEUTER?

The word “spay” refers to the sterilization of female pets. The term “neuter,” while more commonly used to refer to the castration of male pets, can be used to describe the sterilization of either female or male pets through the removal of reproductive organs.

## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF SPAY AND NEUTER?

**Healthier Pets.** Reducing or eliminating the risk of certain cancers and other diseases. Because spay/neuter often reduces the tendency to fight with other animals, it also protects your pet from fight-related injuries and from dangerous infections spread through bite wounds. Spayed/neutered animals wander less and stay closer to home. As a result, they are less likely to be lost or hit by cars.

**Happy Families.** Spay/neuter reduces or eliminates spraying (marking objects with a spray of urine), yowling/howling, escaping, and other troublesome behaviors. You won’t have to deal with the mess or the inconvenience of a pet in heat (or a male pet reacting to a female in heat). You’ll be saved the considerable amount of time, money, and hassle (not to mention property damage!) involved in raising litters of puppies or kittens.

**Healthy Communities.** Spay/neuter has a direct impact on the incidence of dog bites in a community. The majority of dog bites (60–80 percent) are caused by intact male dogs. Pregnant or nursing female dogs are more likely to bite as well. Reducing your pet’s likelihood of biting or fighting may also help protect you from potential legal action. Spayed/neutered pets are less likely to engage in behaviors that could cause problems with neighbors.

**No More Homeless Pets.** Spay/neuter directly impacts the number of animals that lose their lives in our shelters and on our streets. Having your pet spayed or neutered frees up homes for homeless pets that are already born. By getting your pet fixed, you are part of the campaign to reach the day when there are truly no more homeless pets!

## WILL MY PET GET FAT?

Just like people, pets become overweight when they eat too much and/or exercise too little. An appropriate diet and sufficient activity will keep your pet slender and healthy.

## **AT WHAT AGE SHOULD I GET MY PET SPAYED / NEUTERED?**

Generally most cats and dogs will hit sexual maturity (breeding age) at around 5-6 months old. It is important to speak with your veterinarian about when the right time will be for your pet.

## **ISN'T IT HEALTHIER FOR MY PET TO HAVE ONE LITTER?**

Medical evidence indicates just the opposite. In fact, the evidence shows that females spayed before their first heat are typically healthier. Cats can go into heat and get pregnant as early as five months of age, so it's important to spay early.

## **HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?**

The cost varies, depending on the veterinarian that you choose, but spay/neuter is a one-time cost, a bargain when you consider the cost of taking care of litter after litter of puppies or kittens.

## **WHAT IF I CANNOT AFFORD THE COST?**

Alpine Humane Society offers assistance to the Alpine community for spay and neuter costs and will pay a portion if not all of the cost if you cannot afford it. Call 837-2532 today to speak with them, they will be happy to assist you.

## **HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE FOR AN ANIMAL TO RECOVER FROM THE PROCEDURE?**

Depending on your pet's age, size, and health, he/she may be kept at the vet's for a few hours or overnight. Your veterinarian can give you more details. The surgery to fix animals is routine, and they generally bounce back fairly quickly.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Information courtesy of Best Friends Animal Society and Alpine Animal Services

**Spay or Neuter Your Pet | Best Friends Animal Society:**

<https://resources.bestfriends.org/article/spay-or-neuter-your-pet>

**Spay and Neuter – Alpine Humane Society:**

<https://alpinehumanesociety.org/spay-and-neuter>

