

# SPAY OR NEUTER YOUR PET

## *No more homeless pets*



Spaying or neutering is one of the greatest gifts you can provide your pet, your family, and your community. These routine medical procedures not only help control pet overpopulation, but they may also prevent medical and behavioral problems from developing, allowing your pet to lead a longer, healthier, and happier life.

### **What is spay/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.

### **What are some benefits of spay/neuter?**

*Healthy Pets.* Spay/neuter improves your pet’s health, 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 viruses 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.

*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 altered 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!

*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.

### **Will my pet’s behavior change after the surgery?**

Spay/neuter can result in some behavior changes – for the better! Spayed or neutered pets are often less aggressive, more relaxed, and even more affectionate. Contrary to what some people fear, pets show no signs of “missing” mating or breeding. Rather, they are more content without those raging hormones!



Montgomery County Animal Shelter  
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936.442.7738

[www.mcaspets.org](http://www.mcaspets.org) • [www.facebook.com/mcastx](http://www.facebook.com/mcastx)

### **Will my pet become 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.

### **How young can a dog or cat be spayed/neutered?**

Puppies and kittens can now be spayed very early – as young as eight weeks. Though they may seem fragile at that age, healthy puppies and kittens are actually quite strong and recover quickly from the surgery. If your veterinarian is trained in early spay/neuter, the procedures are fast and easy. In addition, the cost for spaying or neutering a dog is often based on the weight of the animal and increases along with the dog's weight. Spaying or neutering early can save you money!



### **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 services offered in your community, 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. MCAS fees are \$40 for a male, and \$60 for a female.

### **But what if I want my kids to have the experience of raising puppies or kittens?**

Contact MCAS and sign up as a foster family for expectant or new mothers. While most mothers prefer not to have an audience while they are actually giving birth, your family may be able to play an invaluable role as a foster family for newborn puppies or kittens.

So, make an appointment today with MCAS to spay or neuter your pets. They'll be happier, and so will 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.