



## Female Dog Neutering Information



Thousands of unwanted dogs are put to sleep every year because there are not enough homes for them. You can help by neutering your dog. We recommend that your female dog has her first season and then be neutered two to three months later. In certain circumstances, if there is an entire male dog in the household, she can be spayed before her first season at six months of age.

## **The benefits of having your female dog spayed:**

- No unwanted puppies to look after
- No male dogs calling when she is in season
- No problems exercising when in season
- Many unneutered female dogs have a false pregnancy after a season and, although this is natural, it can cause behavioural and even medical problems
- Female dogs in heat can be messy – they produce a bloody discharge for three weeks or more

## **The health benefits for your pet:**

- Removes the risk of pyometra. This is an infection in the womb which can be fatal and is often seen in older unneutered female dogs.
- Removes the risk of complications during labour
- Reduces the risk of her developing mammary tumours if she is done at a young age, the benefit is lost as she gets older
- Reduces the risk of tumours of the ovaries or womb and less risk of vaginal tumours

Some people worry that their dog's personality will change. This isn't true. People also worry that their pet will get fat. Neutered animals will have lower food requirements so you just need to feed them a little less.

## **Does she need to have a litter first?**

No. There is no evidence that your pet is better adjusted by having a litter or indeed missing out by not having a litter. Indeed, the risks of having a litter and the potential complications can mean, allowing your pet to have a litter may leave them much worse off.

## **The risks:**

The risks associated are minimal however with there is always a risk with anaesthetic. There is a tiny risk of bleeding problems and very rarely, there can be a wound problem afterwards, especially if the patient isn't too impressed with her stitches and interrupts the healing process.

There is a small risk of urinary incontinence later in life after spaying. This is higher in certain breeds, especially if done before the first season. Urinary incontinence can be treated by medical therapy.

## **What happens on the day of the op?**

She is admitted in the morning and discharged in the afternoon of the same day.

Once admitted she will be given an anaesthetic and her ovaries and womb are removed through an incision made on the underside of the abdomen.

She will have stitches, these may be dissolvable but she will need to be seen by the nurse 7 – 10 days after the procedure for a wound check.

She will have a small shaved area on her belly – this hair will grow back in a few weeks.

Your pet will generally go home feeling a little tired but most are up and about just a few hours after they've had their operation. Occasionally the patient may feel a little sorry for herself, in which case painkillers may be prescribed.

She will not be allowed to go near her wound. There are a couple of options available that will stop her being able to do this. Prices vary so please speak to one of the nursing team at the admit appointment.

- **Buster Collar**: attaches around her neck and goes up over her head
- **Medical Pet Shirt**: like a baby grow, unbuttons near the tail so your pet can still get out to toilet.

**\*\* PLEASE DO NOT FEED YOUR PET AFTER 11PM THE NIGHT BEFORE THEIR OP AND LIFT THEIR WATER BOWL IN THE MORNING \*\***

## **After the op:**

Your pet will automatically be put onto a reminder for a post neuter weight check. Our nurses would like to see your pet two months after the procedure as there can be a risk of unwanted weight gain if her diet is not closely monitored. These appointments are FREE.

## **I want my dog to have a litter**

Whilst nobody is going to stop you doing this, make sure you are clear on the reasons why you want a litter.

Although everyone loves their own pet and thinks they are perfect, it is important to carefully think through why you want to breed from your pet specifically. You need to weigh up the pros and cons carefully. Here are a few things to consider:

- Most 'stud' animals have a proven 'excellence'.
- You may want a 'replacement' for your pet, but you will potentially have 6 or 7 'replacements' to raise and rehome.
- If things don't go to plan, medical care can be expensive.
- Breeding of animals is an area not covered under most insurance policies. Will you be able to afford if this goes wrong? – A caesarian will cost somewhere between £500 and £2000 during the daytime and could be more out of hours.
- Rearing a healthy litter is still costly by the time you have fed, wormed, vaccinated, cared for and loved them through the first weeks of life. Most people do not make money from breeding.

