

SPAYING & NEUTERING: MYTHS AND FACTS

For Responsible Dog/Cat parents!!

De-sexing is the ultimate endocrine disruption.

Emerging research in dogs is showing that this common practice indeed comes with a slew of problems.

- **Shortened lifespan** – spaying female dogs under four years old, reduces healthy life spans by 30 percent (that translates to three to six years less time with you, depending on breed!)
- **Cardiac hemangiosarcoma** – 5 times higher risk in spayed females and 1.6 times in neutered males
- **Bone cancer** – up to 3.8 times higher
- **Prostate cancer** – up to 4.3 times higher
- **Transitional cell carcinoma (bladder cancer)** – up to 4 times higher
- **Lymphosarcoma, hemangiosarcoma, mast cell tumors** – increased risk
- **Abnormal bone growth and development** – increased risk
- **Cranial cruciate ligament ruptures** – higher incidence in early-neutered dogs
- **Hip dysplasia** – twice as common in early-neutered males
- **Patellar luxation** – 3.1 times higher
- **Joint disorders** – up to 5 times higher in Labradors and Golden Retrievers, and affects up to 21 percent of German Shepherds
- **Urinary incontinence and cystitis** – increased risk
- **Hypothyroidism** – increased occurrence
- **Infectious diseases** – increased incidence
- **Adverse reactions to vaccines** – 27 to 38 percent greater risk in neutered dogs
- **Behavioral problems** (noise phobia, fear behavior, aggression, “ADD” etc) – increased risk
- **Roll in and eat feces** – more common in altered dogs
- **Fatal acute pancreatitis** – 22 times higher in spayed females
- **Weight gain/obesity** – 50 to 100 percent more likely
- **Decreased levels of energy** – a common side effect

That’s not a pretty picture, wouldn’t you say?

What About Cats?

- Obesity
- Possibly higher risk of urinary obstruction in males due to underdeveloped urethra

Sex Hormones – Do Animals Need Them?

- Many regulatory functions
- Work in tandem with other hormone glands
- Immune system regulation and self-recognition (opposite is autoimmune disease)
- Bone growth and development
- Etc.

Alternatives

- Leaving them intact
- Vasectomy (only useful if freely around intact females or if required by breeder)
- Tubal ligation (only useful if freely around intact females or if required by breeder)
- Ovary-sparing spay (only uterus including cervix removed)

- Cats:
 - Removing only ovaries to limit scar tissue formation (uterus is left inside)
 - Males – only neutering if marking or otherwise difficult or if roaming outside

Pyometra

- Intact female dogs and cats at risk
- 1-4 months after heat
- Open: cervix open and pus can drain
- Closed: cervix closed, no drainage
- Emergency!!
- Signs:
 - Excessive licking of vulva
 - Vaginal discharge
 - Behavior changes (depressed, grumpy, clingy)
 - Lethargy
 - Increased water consumption and urination
 - Anorexia, vomiting and diarrhea
 - Fever

Things To Do If Your Pet Was Already Altered:

- Bodywork to restore mobility and release tension from scar formation
- Supplementing with glandulars (Standard Process, Mercola, gonadal tissue)
- Testing hormone levels if issues arise
- Urinary incontinence:
 - LeaksNoMore (Homeopet): can work well. Combo remedy
 - Chinese herbs based on pattern
 - Chiro
 - Visceral manipulation (works on fascia)
 - Acupuncture/pressure (KI3, GV 20, Ying Tang)
 - Plant estrogens: Freshly ground flaxseeds (1 Tbs/40 lbs BID)
 - Symplex-F and M

Myths:

- Retained testicles turn into tumors:
 - Incidence is approximately 13 percent
 - Usually benign growths (monitor with ultrasound every 2 years)
- Behavior issues significantly more prevalent
 - Spaying and neutering doesn't change aggression
 - Increase in noise phobias and sexual conduct
 - Heightened excitability
 - Less trainable
- Mammary Tumors
 - Weak evidence of increased risk
 - Dog: 50% malignant (early detection important)
 - Cats: 90% malignant (spay to prevent)
- Prostate Tumors
 - Cancer up to 4.3 times higher in neutered dogs
 - Benign hypertrophy (enlargement) easily fixed through neutering