

## Myths and facts about spaying and neutering

**Myth:** Neutering my pet will make him fat and lazy.

**Fact:** Overfeeding and lack of exercise cause pets to become overweight and lethargic – not neutering. If you continue to exercise your pet sufficiently and monitor his food intake he'll remain trim and fit.

**Myth:** Spaying and neutering interferes with nature.

**Fact:** Domesticated cats and dogs are completely dependent on people. It's our responsibility as their guardians to make sure the number of companion animals born doesn't exceed the number of available homes.

**Myth:** Spaying or neutering is far too costly.

**Fact:** While some owners may find the cost of surgery high, it is a small price to pay compared to the cost of raising your pet's litter(s), including veterinary bills and food. And the costs for other medical problems that can follow as a result of your pet having just one litter, such as mammary cancer, are far greater than the cost of spaying.

**Myth:** Only dogs and cats should be spayed or neutered.

**Fact:** For health and behavioural reasons, spaying and neutering are also recommended for rabbits. Female ferrets should also be spayed; if they go into heat and don't mate they can become anemic and die. Veterinarians recommend spaying and neutering guinea pigs, and even small rodents such as mice can have surgery. If your veterinarian doesn't perform small animal surgery, keep males and females separated.

**Myth:** Neutering my dog will make him less protective.

**Fact:** Neutering will not affect your dog's basic personality or his instinct to protect his home and family.

## Help reduce pet overpopulation and support your local animal shelter

- Spay or neuter your pet
- Donate or volunteer at your local animal shelter
- Adopt a new pet from your local shelter
- Become a foster parent for animals at your local shelter
- Spread the spay/neuter message to family, friends and colleagues

The Ontario SPCA spays or neuters healthy animals before adoption from our shelters. When adopted animals are too young to be spayed or neutered, the Society offers rebate incentives to encourage people to take their new companions to their veterinarians for the procedure. We are doing our part to reduce pet overpopulation – we hope you will do your part by making the responsible choice to have your pet spayed or neutered.

For more information about spaying or neutering your pet contact your veterinarian, local Ontario SPCA Branch or affiliated Humane Society.

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Protecting animals since 1873, the Ontario SPCA is a registered charity comprised of over 50 branches and affiliated humane societies relying primarily on donations to fund animal protection, care and rehabilitation for all animals, government and industry advocacy, and public education. The *Ontario SPCA Act* mandates the Society to enforce animal cruelty laws and provides Society investigators with police powers to do so – making the Ontario SPCA unique among animal welfare organizations in the province. The Ontario SPCA is a member of the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies, the World Society for the Protection of Animals, and is affiliated with the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals.

Charitable Business Number 88969 1044 RR0002

Your local Ontario SPCA Branch or affiliated Humane Society is:



# SPAY & NEUTER

The responsible choice.  
For COUNTLESS reasons.

**Every year across Canada tens of thousands of healthy, adoptable animals are euthanized because there are not enough adoptive homes available.**



**2. Lengthen the life of your female pets.**

Spaying (the removal of a female animal's ovaries and uterus), especially before full maturity, can eliminate or significantly lower the risk of your cat or dog developing numerous health problems, including ovarian cancer, breast cancer (90% fatal in cats, 50% fatal in dogs), birth complications and non-cancerous, but potentially life-threatening, diseases (e.g. uterine infections).

**In seven years, one cat and her offspring can produce 420,000 cats.**

**3. Improve the safety of your male pets.**

Neutering (the removal of a male animal's testicles) eliminates the chance your cat or dog will develop testicular cancer and decreases the incidence of prostate disease. What's more, an intact male in search of a mate may dig up your

yard, scratch your door or chew his restraint to escape. If he escapes he may get lost, stolen, taken to an animal shelter or animal control facility, scratched and bitten in fights with other males or struck by traffic.

**Pet overpopulation is at a crisis level in Ontario. Be part of the solution - spay or neuter your pet!**

**4. Make your pets more contented and affectionate companions.**

Cats or dogs who are spayed or neutered typically show fewer behaviour problems and are less likely to bite, roam, spray and mark territory. Spaying also eliminates your pet's heat cycle. Female cats in heat can cry continuously; show nervous, restless behaviour; and urinate more frequently – sometimes all over the house. Unspayed dogs in heat generally have a bloody discharge for about a week that can leave bloodstains around the house.



Pet overpopulation is at a crisis level in Ontario and is undeniably perpetuated one litter at a time. By making the responsible choice to spay or neuter your pet you will become a part of the pet overpopulation solution and will improve the lives of countless animals – including your own – by helping to:

**1. Give animals in shelters a greater chance of finding a home.**

While you may find good homes for your pet's litter, each home you find means that there is one less home available for the thousands of cats and dogs already waiting to be adopted. And, within a year's time, your pet's offspring may each have their own litter – adding even more animals to the population.

**In six years, one female dog and her offspring can produce 67,000 dogs.**