

Spaying and Neutering:



At what age do female dogs/cats usually begin their "heat" cycles?

Depending on the breed and size, "heat", or estrus, normally begins between 6 months and 1½ years of age. Smaller breeds generally begin at a younger age than large breeds. Estrual cycles tend to become seasonal and regular as the animal matures. Often mature females cycle twice a year, but not necessarily at exact six-month intervals.

Is it a good idea to have my pet "spayed" or "neutered"?

Yes! We recommend spaying or neutering your pet, and here are a few reasons why:

- Non-sterilized pets frequently develop undesirable behavior traits, such as fighting or roaming. In addition to owner inconvenience, these traits may endanger your pets' life and longevity!
- Certain disease processes are ***less likely*** to occur in sterilized animals, such as mammary (breast) or testicular cancer.
- Surgical sterilization is the most consistent means of controlling the pet population problem.

When is the best time to have my female spayed?

The optimum age to have a dog or cat spayed varies. For small breed dogs, we recommend spaying after five to six months of age in order to ensure that their baby teeth have fallen out. Large breed dogs ideally are spayed between four and five months due to their size. Cats are generally ready by five to six months of age. Anecdotal evidence suggests females may derive some hormonal benefit as regards bone maturation up to that time. From a long-term health standpoint, however, having a female spayed before its first estrus is the best way to avoid aging health problems.

When should my male pet be neutered?

Again, for small breed dogs and cats we recommend five to six months of age, and for large breed dogs, four to five months. Undesirable male behavior usually begins soon after six months of age.

