





## Reasons to Spay or Neuter Your Pet(s)


 **Spaying and neutering is the only way to eliminate pet overpopulation.** Between 5- and 7-million dogs and cats enter American shelters each year. (Intakes are fairly evenly divided between animals relinquished by owners and those picked up by animal control.) Only about 20% of dogs and less than 5% of cats entering shelters through animal control are ever claimed by their owners. A conservative national estimate is that 3- to 4-million of the dogs and cats who enter shelters are euthanized. That amounts to 60% of the dogs and 70% of the cats. Barely 10% of the animals received by shelters have been spayed or neutered.


For every human born in the United States, 45 cats and 15 dogs will be born. Euthanasia rates are so high, because there simply aren't enough homes. Every home found for one of your pet's offspring takes a home away from a worthy dog or cat already waiting in a shelter. The problem of pet overpopulation is created and perpetuated one litter at a time, and it is solved one owner at a time.


 **Spayed or neutered pets are less prone to a variety of diseases.** Spayed females have a lower risk of breast cancer, which is 90% fatal in cats and 50% fatal in dogs, and no risk of uterine or ovarian cancers and infections. Neutered males have no risk of testicular disease and a lower risk of prostate diseases.


 **The cost of having your pet spayed or neutered is considerably less** than the cost of caring for a pregnant animal and the resulting litter(s) of puppies or kittens. Which leads into the next reason...


 **If you think you can make money from breeding your pet, think again.** Sure, if you avoid the vet, scrimp on nutrition, and neglect the newborns, you can make a few bucks. But, if you're truly humane, between prenatal and neonatal vet visits, food, vaccinations, and all the other expenses (not to mention the work involved), you won't make much money. That's why puppy millers hate basic welfare regulations: Taking proper care of animals is expensive.


 **Spaying or neutering can lead to better pet behavior.** A spayed female won't go into heat, which will prevent yowling, frequent urination, and discharge. Neutered male dogs are less likely to obsessively mark their territory, and neutered male cats less inclined to spray. Neutered male animals have less of a "need" to roam, in search of a mate.

 **Neutered males tend to be less aggressive to both animals and people,** especially if neutered at an early age. Thus, neutering can prevent fights between pets.

 **While some of a pet's behavior can be improved** – like roaming, spraying, aggression – **an animal's basic disposition and instincts remain intact.** A dog's protective instinct towards his or her family and home remain after spaying or neutering, as does the animal's personality and fundamental nature.

 **If more pets are spayed or neutered, there will be fewer homeless animals for communities to "control."** Towns and cities across the country spend millions of dollars to control unwanted dogs and cats. Stray and roaming animals can prompt attacks on people and other animals, create nuisances for neighbors, and cause accidents.

 **Dogs and cats can breed incredibly often, from a very early age, and on a regular basis.** Female cats can breed three times a year and have an average of four kittens per litter. Dogs can breed twice a year and have an average of six to ten puppies per litter. Female cats can begin breeding as early as four months, and dogs as early as six months.

 **Allowing your dog or cat to breed because you want a carbon copy of your beloved pet makes no sense.** Puppies and kittens are no more clones of their parents than human babies are of theirs. Some traits and characteristics may come through, but there is no determining which ones. Even purebreds vary from individual to individual. Animals have diverse and unique "personalities" just as people do.