

Spaying or Neutering Your Pet

There are many benefits to having your pet spayed or neutered. Immediately recognized benefits include decreased marking habits, decreased wandering and roaming, decreased behavioral problems among males, clean carpets (no spotting on your floors when in heat), and no unwanted kittens or puppies.

Studies have actually shown that spayed/neutered animals live longer. Once the ovaries and uterus are removed there is no chance of acquiring uterine or ovarian cancer. Ditto for the old testicles. Testicular tumors are very common in older intact male dogs. Studies estimate that the prevalence of testicular tumors in intact male dogs over 4 years of age is greater than 10%. Among female dogs, having them spayed also eliminates the possibility of developing a life-threatening pyometra. There has also been a significant amount of research that links the risk of developing mammary tumors with the age at which a bitch is spayed:

- * if bitch is spayed prior to first heat, 0.5% chance of developing a mammary tumor
- * if bitch is spayed after the first heat, 8% chance of developing mammary tumor
- * if bitch is spayed after the second or subsequent heat, 26% chance of developing mammary tumor
- * an older bitch that is not spayed is at higher risk for mammary cancer than any other type of cancer

At Kinzua Vet Clinic, we recommend having your cat or dog spayed prior to 6 months of age, before their first heat cycle. Be sure to schedule your pet's surgery several weeks in advance. There is an increased surgical risk for animals that are in heat or obese. Keeping your pet at an ideal body weight will minimize these risks.