

## POINTS TO PAWNDER SERIES

Indiana Proactive Animal Welfare, Inc.  
P.O. Box 729  
Carmel, Indiana 46082  
(317) 345-6773  
[www.indiana-paw.com](http://www.indiana-paw.com)



### Why To Spay Or Neuter Your Pet

Spaying or neutering your dog or cat is the responsible thing to do, and leads to tremendous benefits to you and your pet. It's a one-time veterinary surgical procedure that will help your pet lead a longer, healthier life, be better-behaved, and save your pet from giving birth to puppies or kittens, when millions already have to be euthanized each year because there aren't enough homes for them. Below is information about the many benefits to spay/neuter surgery, along with basic information about what the surgery entails.

#### What Does It Mean To Spay Or Neuter Your Pet?



- Spaying a female dog or cat means a veterinarian removes her ovaries and uterus. Neutering a male dog or cat means a veterinarian removes his testicles. These are one-time veterinary surgical procedures.
- Your vet can discuss with you the best age to spay or neuter your pet. Most encourage you to have it done as early as possible, because doing so before your pet is 6 months of age will greatly reduce your female pet's risk of developing breast cancer and your male pet's risk of developing testicular or prostate cancer.
- The cost of the surgery will vary, depending on your pet's age, size, and health. If you need financial assistance, Indiana-PAW can point you to low-cost spay/neuter clinics and other resources at: [www.indiana-paw.com](http://www.indiana-paw.com)

#### Health Benefits To Your Pet

- Spaying or neutering your pet will help him/her lead a longer, healthier life.
  - Spaying your female dog or cat will significantly reduce her chances of developing uterine, breast, and/or ovarian cancer – all of which can be fatal and are difficult and expensive to treat. It will also eliminate the possibility of her developing a pyometra, which is a severe uterine infection that can be fatal if left untreated.
  - Neutering your male dog or cat will eliminate his risk for testicular cancer, and significantly decrease his risk for prostate cancer – both of which can be fatal and are difficult and expensive to treat.

#### Behavioral Benefits To Your Pet (And You!)

- Spaying or neutering your pet will help your pet be a calmer, more manageable, affectionate member of the family.
  - Spaying or neutering your pet will make them less likely to bite.
  - Spaying or neutering your pet will make them less likely to try to run away and roam the neighborhood, looking for a mate and getting into fights with other animals and being at risk for becoming lost or hit by a car.

- Neutering your male dog or cat will reduce their desire to mark their territory by spraying strong-smelling urine in and around the house.
- Spaying your female dog or cat will eliminate her heat cycle, which is a behavioral benefit, because animals in heat tend to yowl and cry incessantly, urinate frequently (often, all over the house), show nervous behavior, have a bloody discharge, and attract unwanted male animals.
- Spaying or neutering your pet has an overall calming effect on your pet, making them happier and far more likely to be well-mannered.

**Your Decision Helps  
Thousands Of Other Pets**

- Each year, millions of unwanted animals are surrendered to shelters and rescue organizations across the country, and are ultimately euthanized (put to sleep) because there aren't nearly enough homes for them. Allowing your pet to reproduce only adds to this problem.
- Even if you're able to find homes for your pet's kittens or puppies, doing so simply means there are that many fewer homes available for animals in shelters, who will be euthanized as a result of your failure to have your pet sterilized.
- Each of your pets' offspring can, in less than one year, have a litter of their own, thereby adding exponentially to the already enormous pet overpopulation crisis.

**Common Myths About Spay &  
Neutering**

- **Myth:** Dogs and cats become fat and lazy once they are spayed or neutered.  
**Fact:** Wrong. Dogs and cats become fat and lazy because their owners over-feed and under-exercise them, not because they've been sterilized.
- **Myth:** A spayed or neutered dog won't be protective of the house and family.  
**Fact:** Wrong. Protectiveness and aggression are often confused. Spaying or neutering does not affect a dog's natural instinct to protect the home and family.
- **Myth:** Neutering a male dog or cat will make him "less of a male."  
**Fact:** Wrong. Animals don't have the capacity to comprehend the concept of sexual identity and ego like humans do. Your pet will not suffer any emotional trauma or identity crisis if neutered.
- **Myth:** My children should experience the "miracle of birth."  
**Fact:** Absolutely wrong. There are numerous books and videos available to teach children about birth in a responsible manner. Allowing your pet to produce offspring you have no intention of keeping teaches your children irresponsible behavior and that animals are an expendable commodity. Spaying and neutering your dog or cat, on the other hand, teaches your children how to act responsibly and that preventing the birth of animals will save the lives of animals already living.

**Suggested Reading**

- The Humane Society of the United States, "Why You Should Spay Or Neuter Your Pet,"  
[http://www.hsus.org/pets/pet\\_care/why\\_you\\_should\\_spay\\_or\\_neuter\\_your\\_pet.html](http://www.hsus.org/pets/pet_care/why_you_should_spay_or_neuter_your_pet.html)
- ASPCA, "Why Spay Or Neuter?"  
<http://www.asPCA.org/site/PageServer?pagename=spayneuter>

**Important Note:** Indiana-PAW's POINTS TO PAWNDER SERIES is intended to provide quick tips to help citizens address common pet health and behavior questions. It is not intended to replace consultation with one's veterinarian and/or a trained behavior specialist.

