

## Spaying and Castration (Desexing)

When you bring in your animal to get 'fixed', it is not really broken. We remove his/her reproductive organs. For males we remove their testicles (castration). For females we remove the uterus and horns as well as the ovaries (spay). This involves a general anaesthetic. Your pet will be fast asleep dreaming of eating and hunting while the procedure is being done. We also offer rabbit neutering.

The benefits:

Females:

- Reduced chance of hormone-related diseases such as mammary, ovarian, and uterine cancers, which can be fatal
- No pyometra. All entire females are at risk to this. This is an infection in the uterus and needs to be surgically corrected
- No more puppies/kittens
- Reduced wandering to look for mates
- No more heats and bleeding on your carpet
- Female cats can cycle every 3 weeks in spring if not spayed

Males:

- Reduced risk of prostate, testicular, and perianal tumors
- Less fighting, wandering and looking for mates
- Tom cats: No spraying and reduced fighting

The risks:

As with every anaesthetic there are risks to your pet. Some can react badly to drugs. Furthermore spaying females may be routine but it is invasive and we can get some that bleed more than others. For further information contact the clinic.

When to do this:

Early spaying and castration reduces the risk of hormone related diseases. Usually between 6 months to 1 year old. Female cats can get their first heat as early as 4 months old and can be spayed earlier. Ask about getting your pet desexed at your puppy/kitten vaccinations.

## Something to make you smile.....

Two snakes were crawling along when one snake asked the other, "Are we poisonous?" The other replied, "You're darn right we are! We're rattlesnakes. Why do you ask?" To which the first replied, "Because I just bit my tongue!"

Cat's motto: No matter what you've done wrong, always try to make it look like the dog did it.



## Case of the month: Are these crystals precious?

Monty is a 3 year old castrated male cat. In the last week he has had 3 accidents in the house. Small amounts of blood stained urine decorated the carpet. He was otherwise doing well and still eating and drinking. Yesterday he sat in his litter tray much longer than usual and was crying out in pain. He ate only a little food last night. The owner decided to bring him in to get checked.

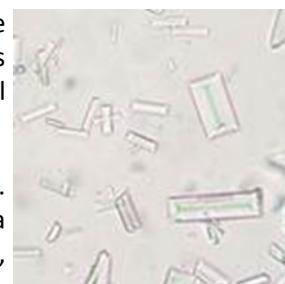
When he was brought in Monty was very bright. His temperature was normal. When his abdomen was palpated it was found that his bladder was quite enlarged. It was attempted to empty his bladder by putting constant but gentle pressure on his belly. This was not successful. A special urinary catheter was placed to empty his bladder. While attempting to pass the catheter in to the bladder, an obstruction was presented. Sterile saline was syringed to help pass through this area. After a few minutes this was achieved. His bladder was emptied through the catheter.

An X-ray was taken after his bladder was emptied. No bladder stones were seen.

His urine was spun down in a centrifuge and the sediment was examined. Lots of box shaped crystals were found as well as red blood cells and debris. He was diagnosed with a urethral plug caused by struvite crystals. His bladder was flushed with sterile saline to remove further crystals.

He was discharged the following day after he managed to urinate on his own in the clinic. He was sent home on a special diet to dissolve any further crystals in his urine. His owner was informed to keep a good eye on his urination as it is not uncommon for cats to get urethral plugs again.

Crystals in the urine can join together to form little lumps and bladder stones (uroliths). These can block the lower urinary tract resulting in an animal not able to urinate. This is a life threatening condition if left too long. The most common crystals in cats are struvite, calcium oxalate and urate crystals.



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## Pregnancy termination:

There are a few options if your female dog has had some unwanted attention. These depend on whether you wish to have her pups in the future or not. The most obvious one is spaying (desexing). This can be performed even when she is already well into her pregnancy. However, as the blood supply develops more and more in late pregnancy, the risks of complications during surgery are much higher.

The other option is a serial of 2 injections. These must be given exactly 24 hours apart and preferably within 22 days of the mating date. Costs vary depending on the size of your dog. Risks associated with this are pyometra, stomach upsets and failure of treatment.

The best answer is to avoid her getting pregnant in the first place. Strict confinement while she is on heat is the safest bet. Most heats last for about 3 weeks. Remember, males are very interested during this time and a fence isn't too much of a hurdle. A swollen vulva and bloody discharge are the most common signs of heat.

Alternatively there are medications to postpone a bitch coming into heat or to terminate her heat if treated within the first few days. These too are not without side effects.

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## Repeat Prescriptions

We have had a number of enquires about why revisits are required for repeat prescriptions lately. Just as people need to visit their doctor for ongoing prescriptions, we need to see your pet in consult every 6 months to continue dispensing medication to them. In some cases such as diabetes even more frequent visits are required. This is a requirement set out by the Agricultural Compounds and Veterinary Medicines (ACVM) Act. It is for the well being of your pet. Regular revisits allow us to assess how your pet is responding to the medication and make adjustments if necessary. It also is a good opportunity to bring up any further health concerns you may have with your pet. Please phone in advance prior to your pets medication getting too low, we need 24 hours turnaround to dispense medications when a visit is not required.



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