

## Myths and Facts About Spaying and Neutering



Every single argument that people use to justify not altering their pets is a cruel fallacy that ultimately means only misery and suffering for more helpless animals somewhere down the line. The following list has been gathered from painstakingly researched and documented studies done by humane institutions across the country, and should be read and taken to heart by everyone who keeps companion animals.

**MYTH:** Every female pet should be allowed to have at least one litter before being spayed.

**FACT:** Why should she? An animal spayed before her first heat never knows, and never misses, the experience of breeding or giving birth. Furthermore, she will avoid the sensation of sexual frustration, and the discomfort and risks of pregnancy and labor. She will never get uterine or ovarian cancer, and her chances of developing breast tumors are greatly reduced.

**MYTH:** It's wrong to deprive an animal of the natural right to mate and reproduce. **FACT:** The altered animal does not experience the urge to mate and is, therefore, not being physically or psychologically deprived of anything. The animal is actually a great deal better off since the neutered male escapes the often viscous injuries incurred in battles over females in heat, and both the unaltered male and female experience severe stress and frustration if they are unable-for whatever reasons-to engage in sexual behavior.

**MYTH:** Spaying and neutering animals alters their personalities.

**FACT:** The only personalities that may result from altering an animal are for the better. They become more affectionate and calm, and are less likely to wander from home.

**MYTH:** The surgery will be painful for the animal.

**FACT:** The techniques used in modern veterinary medicine are as sophisticated as those employed for human surgery, and good veterinarians provide close post-operative observation and care. The animal's pain is negligible.

**MYTH:** The surgery is too expensive.

**FACT:** The cost of surgery is a one-time investment, whereas when an unaltered animal continues reproducing litters year after year she requires extra feeding, the new pups and kitten must be fed, and finding homes for them will entail effort and possible expense. Most importantly, the price of surgery is a miniscule amount to pay for the assurance that one is not responsible for allowing countless new animals to be born into life against which the odds are heavily weighted.

**MYTH:** Responsible "pet owners" find homes for their animals' litters, so they aren't contributing to the problem.

**FACT:** There is no guarantee that all placed animals will still be in those home in a year or so. And those animals will probably have litter, too-how can the original "pet owner" be sure that the second generation will be placed in good homes? Besides, the fact still remains that there are simply too many dogs and cats being born all the time, and only a limited number of homes for them. Those who do not find good homes may displace others who might have been adopted from shelters by people seeking companion animals.

**MYTH:** Humane societies will take care of the surplus animals.

**FACT:** Such organizations do the best they can but, again, the number of unwanted animals is vastly greater than the number of good homes available. Each year in the United States alone, approximately *ten million* unwanted dogs and cats are destroyed in shelters and municipal facilities.