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TO SPAY OR NOT TO SPAY?

Many new pet owners don't think about neutering when their pet is young. Unfortunately, a young female pet will frequently present her owner with a surprise litter of kittens or puppies when they least expect it. Females have their first "heat" cycle from 6-14 months of age. Neutering your male pet helps prevent the neighbors from getting surprise litters as well.

Whether your pet is a male or female, neutering just makes good sense. There are far more pets born in this country every year than there are homes to take them in. These unwanted pets are largely the result of unplanned breeding between pets whose owners intended to neuter them, but "just hadn't gotten around to it."

Sadly, over 90% of unwanted pets in shelters and pounds are euthanized because they cannot be placed in homes. Only responsible pet owners can help prevent pet overpopulation by neutering their pets.

Besides population control, spaying or neutering promotes health, longevity, and good behavior.

Each year many pets needlessly suffer or die because of cancer related to the reproductive organs. These pets have problems largely because they were not neutered at an early age. Studies have shown that the first heat cycle increases the incidence of mammary cancer ten-fold. Subsequent heat cycles are even more detrimental. Male dogs left un-neutered often develop prostate enlargements, prostate infections, and other testosterone related tumors that can lead to costly treatment and even terminal disease.

Early neutering also helps to prevent the development of many behavioral problems. Behavioral problems such as urine marking or spraying, aggression towards people or other animals, and roaming can be drastically reduced by early neutering. Neutered pets tend not to roam as much, which can prevent them from getting lost, hit by a car, or fighting with other pets. While many shelters have moved toward surgical altering as early as two to three months of age, we continue to recommend the age of six to nine months depending on species and breed.

Let us all enable our pets to be better family members by early neutering.

This is provided as a courtesy to our clients and is not intended to be a diagnosis or to supercede any direct instructions by your veterinarian.