

## Neutering Advice

The decision to neuter your pet is very important, it can be the best decision you make for its welfare.

Neutering means the removal of your pets reproductive organs, the operation is commonly called 'spaying' for female cats and dogs while the male operation is called 'castration'.

Neutering is the best way to stop your pet from having an unwanted litter of puppies or kittens and can have a number of benefits to their own life and welfare:

### Behaviour:

- Neutering encourages calmer, more predictable behaviour
- It can help reduce aggressive and unwanted sexual behaviour. Entire males can be very territorial and it is common for them to fight and be destructive.
- Cats and dogs that have been neutered are less likely to stray
- Your pet's behaviour may change significantly when they are in season as they look to find a mate
- Female dogs usually come into season for about three weeks, twice a year which can be messy.

### Health:

- Pregnancy can cause significant health risks to your dog, causing her discomfort and to behave oddly.
- Neutering your dog also avoids the inconvenience and mess of having seasons.
- Neutering can reduce the risk of some cancers developing in later life for both male and female dogs and cats

### The operation

Neutering is major surgery and is performed under general anaesthesia. The operation is carried out in the operating theatre under sterile conditions i.e. sterile surgical instruments and drapes are used for each operation and the veterinary surgeon will wear a sterile operating gown, gloves, and a face mask.

At Orchard House, analgesics (painkillers) are administered in line with current "best" practice and to reduce antibiotic resistance, no antibiotics should be required under normal circumstances.

Our vets are happy to discuss the risks and benefits of the procedure with you before the operation takes place.

For both types of neutering operation, the first post-operative examination is provided free of charge.

At Orchard House, most neutering operations are completed with 'intra-dermal' sutures (stitches), which are buried under the skin surface. This reduces irritation from the sutures, speeds healing and means that it is not necessary to have the sutures removed.

### Spaying

Correctly called ovariectomy this procedure is the surgical removal of both ovaries and the uterus (womb). This means that your pet cannot have a litter and will not come into season again.

Spaying is an irreversible procedure, unlike human sterilisation. The veterinary surgeon can discuss with you all the risks and benefits of the procedure, so that you are fully informed and able to make the right decision for your pet, before the operation.

### Castration

This operation is the surgical removal of both testicles. Your pet will be sterilised, and will also have less 'secondary' male characteristics e.g. reduced aggression, territorial marking or sexual interest.

Castration is **not** the same as a vasectomy in humans, and cannot be reversed.

This surgical procedure is performed under general anaesthesia, and in sterile conditions, as for the female spaying operation. Analgesics (painkillers) are routinely administered. No antibiotics are normally used, and it is very important that you follow all the post op instructions. A dog will need to return to the surgery 2 days after the operation. This is not usually required for tom cats.