

## Doesn't neutering alter an animal's personality?

Personality changes that may result from neutering are for the better. Preventing the instinctual need to find a mate helps your pet stop roaming and becoming calmer; though not less protective of their territory.

## Won't animal shelters take care of the surplus animals?

No. Shelters do their best to place animals in loving homes. However, the number of homeless animals far exceed the number of available homes. This leaves many loving and healthy animals in our community that must be euthanized as the only humane solution to this tragic dilemma. Only birth control can end the over population problem.



## Not only cats and dogs....

Animals of all kinds are becoming increasingly common in Irish households, from rabbits to hamsters to birds and reptiles.

In some cases it can be even more difficult to find homes for their litters, as they can produce an even larger number of babies than dogs or cats! Plus fewer homes are prepared to adopt them, often shelters are already full, and there is a lack of facilities available.

It is therefore very important to limit the birth of 'exotic' animals. One way to do so is to house male and female separately, and/or keep same-sex pairs when possible so as to provide your pet with some company (if it is a social species), without the risk of unwanted reproduction. Alternatively, sterilisation is also available for some species, including rabbits, ferrets, and guinea pigs. Ask your vet for information.

Dog owner must prevent their dogs from roaming freely and to ensure they are securely house at night. Dogs can hunt together in packs and are responsible for many sheep attacks. Under the 'Control of Dogs Act' owners can be held liable for the financial damage inflicted on livestock from an attack by their dog and could result in serious costs.

## Cruelty, Neglect or Abuse

If you suspect an animal is in danger or being abused, please contact the ISPCA National Animal Cruelty Helpline in confidence on 1890 515 515. Help us prevent cruelty to all animals.



Visit [www.ispca.ie](http://www.ispca.ie) for more information and ways to help.

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# IT PAYS TO SPAY OR NEUTER YOUR PET

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## What does the term Spaying or Neutering mean?

**Spaying** is a term used to describe the surgical removal of ovaries and uterus (ovario-hysterectomy) of a female animal).

**Neutering** is a term used to describe the castration – removal of testicles of a male animal. However, neutering can be used in reference to both genders. The surgical procedure performed by a veterinarian under general anaesthesia, renders the animal unable to reproduce. Analgesia (pain control) is also normally offered.

## When can you neuter/spay your pet?

Both procedures can be performed as early as six weeks of age. Early neutering by six months of age is recommended since this guarantees that the animals will not be able to breed and over-populate a community.

## Why should we neuter or spay?

Statistics confirm that thousands of dogs are euthanized in Irish pounds every year. Having your pet neutered ensures that you are not contributing to this unnecessary and tragic waste of lives.

## Health benefits

Through neutering and spaying, you can help your pets live happier, healthier and longer lives. Early neutering prevents uterine infections (pyometra) as well as mammary, uterine, ovarian and testicular cancer. Additionally, the procedure may eliminate or curb undesirable behaviours such as the crying and nervous pacing of a cat in heat and roaming in search of a mate and sexual mounting in males. In turn, cats and dogs which are less prone to roaming are also less likely to be lost, stolen or hit by a car. If you have more than one pet in your household, all the pets will get along better if they are neutered. There is also both surgical (vasectomy, tubal ligation) and non-surgical alternatives (injectable) to neutering for birth control. Ask your vet for information.

## Myths about neutering

### Neutering costs too much?

The cost of caring for a pet including providing veterinary care, should be considered before acquiring an animal. Consider that the costs of having a litter are often more than the cost of neutering, as there could be complications requiring hospitalisation or surgery. You will be faced with finding homes or keeping the off spring yourself or placing more animals into your local shelter. The cost of the well-being of not just your companion animal but of future generations should be considered.

### Neutering/spaying leads to obesity?

Pets can become overweight and less active as a result of overeating and lack of exercise rather than as a direct result of neutering.



## Facts

In nine years, a couple of unneutered cats and all their offspring can produce almost 12 million cats!

In seven years, One un-spayed dog and all her offspring can produce more than 4 million dogs!

## Is it wrong to deprive an animal of the natural right to reproduce?

With domestication, we have selectively changed animal's nature. Domesticated animals share the human environment and their well being is dependent on our care. It's wrong to allow these animals to produce thousands of unwanted offspring that are eventually killed because there is not enough responsible homes.

### What if I can find homes for my pet's litters?

Only a limited number of people want pets so every home you find for your pet's offspring takes away a home from a loving animal already at a shelter.



## Should every female pet have at least one litter before being spayed?

No. In fact, your pet will be healthier if she never sexually matures. Plus it's not easy to find good homes for a litter of pups/kittens. Then again, even if you find a home for your pet's offspring, this means one less home for animals already at a shelter.

## Shouldn't children experience birth?

A more important lesson to teach your child would be responsible pet ownership and concern for life, by explaining why their pet should not have babies.