

Why We Recommend Neutering Your Male Dog

What is a “neuter”?

Neutering is a surgical procedure, done under anesthesia, to remove the testicles and suture the cords. Generally, the dog can go home by the end of the day. This simple procedure is safe and effective, rendering the dog sterile. The benefits of neutering are many, including reducing health risks and negative behaviors.

Cancer and Neutering

Neutering reduces to zero the possibility of testicular cancer, as the testes are removed during the surgery. In addition, statistics have shown that many prostate diseases are much less common in neutered males. Dogs with undescended testicles have an increased tendency to grow tumors over descended testicles. For this reason, these dogs should always be neutered. Given the high costs and uncertain outcome of treating cancer, taking this easy and relatively inexpensive step in protecting your male dog seems an obvious choice.

Running the Risk of Disease

Because fighting is a behavior associated with the natural aggression of intact male dogs, owners should be aware of the associated health risks. When male dogs fight with each other over territory or access to female dogs, they can pass on diseases. Rabies is a serious, sometimes fatal, disease that unvaccinated dogs can transmit to each other by a “saliva to blood” pathway. Sexual activity can be the basis for the transmission of venereal diseases, all negatively impacting the health of your dog. Regular vaccinations, staying indoors and neutering all help to protect your dog from many health risks.

Behavior and Neutering

Intact male dogs are not “bad” when they mark territory with urine, fight other dogs or roam for days on end. Their behavior is directed by hormones and is natural to a male predator in the wild. The problem begins when they need to adapt their behavior to a human household. Neutering is an excellent way to eliminate or at least greatly diminish the incidence of these nuisance behaviors. According to recent statistics, more than 90% of “roaming” (leaving the house and environs looking for potential mates and new territory) is eliminated by neutering a dog. Aggressive behavior toward other male dogs is diminished by more than 60% through neutering. Eliminating this aggressive behavior protects the pet from the resulting injuries and introduction of diseases into the bloodstream. Because the dog is not driven by hormones to protect territory, urine marking is also decreased by more than 50%. Inappropriate mounting is eliminated in about 70% of neutered dogs.

Too Many Puppies!

Although the litter of puppies that your intact male produces may be invisible to you as “somebody else’s problem”, it is really the entire community who bears this burden. Every year, thousands of unwanted, homeless puppies are euthanized. Not only does this indicate a sad failing on our part as pet owners, it carries a hefty price tag. Millions of dollars are required to run the humane societies that provide for our homeless animal population. If more pets were sterilized, these funds could provide other services to the community.

For all of these reasons, Patterson Dog and Cat Hospital hopes that you will decide to neuter your dog.