

Desexing dogs



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We recommend that **all dogs should be desexed between five and six months of age**, before the onset of sexual maturity. This involves spaying (ovariohysterectomy – removal of the uterus and ovaries) in female dogs and castration (removal of testicles) in male dogs.

There are many benefits to desexing:

- Spaying helps to prevent uterine infections and mammary cancers (breast cancers) in female dogs. This is especially beneficial if performed before the first heat cycle. Mammary cancer in particular is not uncommon in undesexed females or in females that are spayed after sexual maturity. There is no strong evidence to support it is better to delay spaying until after the first heat, and it is also fallacy that it is beneficial to your dog's development to have a litter before spaying.
- Spaying stops female dogs coming into season. This prevents unwanted pregnancies and blood spotting.
- Spaying prevents 'false pregnancy', which is a condition where the female dog exhibits hormonal and physical changes of pregnancy (such as milk production) without actually being pregnant.
- Castration makes male dogs more likely to be contented pets, reducing the urge to stray or to be territorial or aggressive. It can also reduce some forms of male dog cancer (e.g. testicular cancer) and prostate disease. Castration does not affect the normal development of the dog's personality.
- Desexing is cheaper when the dog is registered with local councils.

The desexing procedure is routine and safe, and is performed on a day-patient basis. Animals should be fasted on the day of surgery.

A small incision is the only external sign of surgery. Most dogs recover very quickly, with the majority entirely back to normal within a few days, although exercise is restricted for a period of time after the procedure. Any skin sutures that have been put in are removed 10 days after surgery.

We routinely place a tattoo inside the left ear of the dog to indicate that it has been desexed.