**Spay and Neuter—Healthy Pet Week, April 8-14, 2018—Website Content**

**To spay/neuter or not to spay/neuter?**The veterinary community agrees that spaying or neutering your pet can help to prevent many life-threatening diseases and cancers. Both surgeries are routinely performed at most veterinary clinics and have minimal recovery times. Talk to your veterinarian today about spaying or neutering your pet!

**Neutering in Dogs and Cats**

The neuter procedure or orchidectomy is a surgery that completely removes both testicles. It is an out-patient procedure that is recommended at different stages of development depending on the species and breed of your pet. In cats, it is generally recommended to neuter around 4 months of age. In dogs, due to potential skeletal development issues, it is generally recommended to neuter around 6 months of age or older. For more specific breed recommendations, consult your veterinarian today! Please see a full list of benefits to neutering your pet below;

 - Prevents unexpected pregnancies

 - Prevents testicular cancer

 - Decreased risk of prostate cancer

 - Prevents benign prostatic hypertrophy

 - Decreased risk for prostatitis, urinary bleeding, and urinary incontinence

 - Helps with overpopulation problems in animal shelters

**Spaying in Dogs and Cats**

The spay procedure or ovariohysterectomy is a surgery that completely removes the ovaries and the uterus. It is an intra-abdominal procedure that is recommended in dogs and cats around 4-6 months. It is best performed prior to the first heat cycle in our pet dogs, which can occur as early as 6 months of age. Please see a full list of benefits to spaying your pet below;

 - Prevents unexpected pregnancies

 - Prevents ovarian cancer

 - Prevents uterine cancer

 - Prevents pyometra, a life-threatening infection of the uterus

 - Decreased chance of breast cancer, up to 99% reduced risk if spayed prior to 1st heat

 - Helps with overpopulation problems in animal shelters

**Don’t forget your exotic pets!**

It is important to neuter or spay your rabbits around 6 months of age. Intact male rabbits are prone to behavioral problems and intact, adult female rabbits are predisposed to uterine cancer. It is also recommended to spay your rats and guinea pigs to help prevent cancers and cystic ovaries. Please see your exotic veterinarian about these often life-saving, preventative procedures today!

For more information on spaying and neutering your pet, please see the following source below;

<https://www.avma.org/public/PetCare/Pages/spay-neuter.aspx>