



**Penbode**  
Pet Vets Since 1840

# All about neutering

Neutering of female animals is called spaying and neutering of a male is castration. Here at Penbode Pets we routinely neuter dogs, cats, rabbits, guinea pigs and ferrets.

It is estimated that over 5,000 dogs were put down in 2015 after being dumped by their owners. Penbode Pet Vets recommend neutering of dogs and cats to prevent unwanted pregnancies.

## The procedure

Both spaying and castrating of any species requires a general anaesthetic. Neutering is usually a day procedure. Your pet may have sutures (stitches) which are removed about 10 days post op. During this time exercise will need to be restricted. It is important not to let your pet interfere with the sutures so they may need to wear a lampshade type collar or alternatively a pet shirt.

Although neutering procedures are routine surgery, Penbode Pet Vet staff ensures each animal receives a high standard of care. Every animal is given a health check before surgery, and pet owners will be given the option of a blood test (to check kidney and liver blood parameters) and the option of an intravenous fluid drip (to help maintain blood pressure and to help clear the anaesthetic drugs). The nurse admitting your pet on the day of the surgery will be able to advise you. Every pet is monitored by a vet and nurse from arrival at the surgery until being returned back to your care. Post-operative pain relief medications, check up consultations and stitch removal consultations are all included in the cost of the neutering procedure. If you have any worries following surgery then a vet is available to speak to you 24 hours a day.

***If you sign your dog or cat up to the Protect4Life health scheme you can receive great discounts on both neutering and also consultations. Ask your local practice for more details.***

## Neutering Myths

*"My female dog needs to have one litter of pups"*

This is an old wives' tale. Having a litter of pups provides no medical benefit to your dog. In fact there are risks associated with being pregnant and the labour process. Having pups will also not improve your dog's temperament.

*"Neutering will make my dog fat"*

When dogs have been neutered their energy requirements tend to be lower. As long as owners are aware of this and adjust their diet if needed your neutered dog will remain slim and trim!

*"Neutering causes incontinence"*

Some female dogs may develop bladder weakness after spaying. This tends to be more prevalent in certain breeds than others. If this problem does occur it can usually be controlled with medication.

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[www.penbodevets.co.uk](http://www.penbodevets.co.uk)

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# Benefits of the operation and when it should be done

## Dogs

Neutering obviously prevents unwanted pups but there are also strong medical reasons to neuter your dog.

Females	Males
Small breeds can be spayed from 6 months of age, before they have had a season. Larger breed are spayed 3 months after their first season (usually at about 1 year old).	We like male dogs to be mature with stable testosterone levels before they are castrated. This is usually from 12-18 months of age.
Spaying will stop the bleeding that occurs with every heat cycle. Some dogs may develop false pregnancies after being in season which can cause unsettled, clingy, nesting behaviour, being off their food and producing milk. Spaying also significantly reduces the risk of developing mammary cancer later in life. Female dogs can also develop pyometra a life threatening infection in the uterus.	Entire males often wander off in search of females. Some male dogs can develop hypersexual behaviour, often seen as excessive mounting of other animals and people. Neutering eliminates the risk of testicular cancer later in life. Neutering significantly reduces the risk of prostate disease.

## Cats

Females	Males
<b>Cats can be neutered from 4 months of age.</b>	
Female cats often exhibit strange calling behaviour when in season. If outdoors female cats WILL get pregnant when they first come into season and hence be in kitten at 6 months of age.	Unneutered males tend to wander, fight and often spray indoors.

## Rabbits

Rabbits are best kept as a male - female pair. The main reason for neutering then is to stop them 'breeding like rabbits'!

Females
Female rabbits often become aggressive at the time of their seasons.

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