

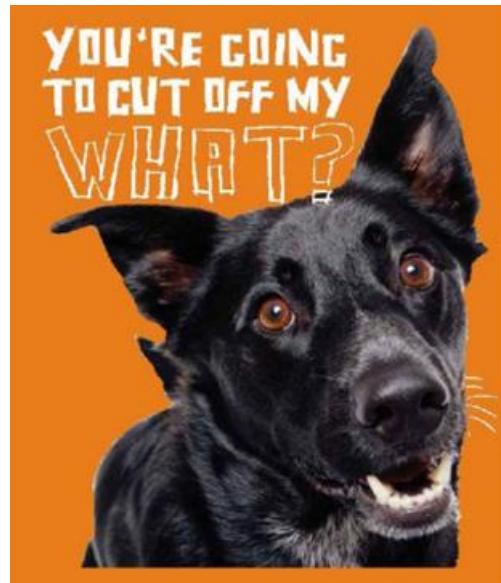


What's Wrong with Spay/Neuter?

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Yes, there is a crisis of unwanted puppies in the U.S. Yes, millions of dogs have to be euthanized every year because somebody didn't spay or neuter their pet. But did you know that the procedure we use for spaying and neutering in the U.S. is causing a host of medical conditions and shortening the lives of our beloved dogs? There is a better solution...



For over 25 years, we have printed "SPAY OR NEUTER: IT IS PART OF RESPONSIBLE PET OWNERSHIP" on every puppy paper we issued. It's directly below the pedigree. If they managed not to notice it there, we ALSO printed a notice on the reverse side, where they fill in the pet's name: "As a responsible owner, if you purchased this animal as a pet, please spay or neuter." *That may have to change.* Important research done in the last 6 years indicates that typical de-sexing is making our dogs sick.

What we mean by de-sexing is our typical spay and neuter surgeries that remove all hormone-secreting tissues. While there are a couple of medical conditions that will require a full spay/neuter surgery, the bulk of our animals will fare MUCH better if sterilized. What does that mean? Only in America do we have to ask, because sterilization is common veterinary practice elsewhere in the civilized world. Sterilization means less invasive alternatives such as tubal ligation, hysterectomy, and vasectomy. These techniques are quick and easy and certainly effective. In fact, once the technique is mastered, they're faster, less risky and potentially less costly than a full spay or neuter

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and most importantly, they preserve normal endocrine function for the animal.

Many holistic vets only recommend any surgery if medically necessary, and are encouraging pet owners who can keep their animals on a leash and supervised to leave them intact.

In a nutshell, here are some of the complications our animals are experiencing that have been directly linked to a typical spay/neuter:

Shortened lifespan. A 2009 study links the age at which female Rottweilers are spayed and the length of their life. Females that kept their ovaries until at least 6 years of age were four times more likely to reach an exceptional age (13 years or more). (Gerald P Murphy Cancer Foundation)

Atypical Cushing's disease. Hormone disruption is a central feature in Cushing's disease. When a dog is spayed or neutered before puberty, the endocrine, glandular and hormonal systems have not yet fully developed. A complete removal of the gonads, resulting in stopping production of all the body's sex hormones (which is what happens during castration or the traditional spay), can force the adrenal glands to produce sex hormones because they're the only remaining tissue in the body that can secrete them. This manifests as atypical Cushing's. (Dr. Karen Becker)

Cardiac tumors. Spayed females are over four to five times as likely to develop cardiac tumors. (Veterinary Medical Database study)

Bone cancer. The risk doubles in de-sexed dogs, primarily larger breeds. (Veterinary Medical Database study)

Abnormal bone growth and development. The earlier the spay or neuter procedure, the taller the dog. Research published in 2000 may explain why: it appears that the removal of estrogen-producing organs in immature dogs – both females and males – can cause growth plates to remain open. This results in irregular body proportions, possible cartilage issues, and joint conformation issues.

Higher rate of CCL ruptures. Spayed and neutered dogs have a significantly higher incidence of cranial cruciate ligament ruptures than their intact counterparts. (Texas Tech U. Health Sciences Center)

Hip dysplasia. Both male and female dogs sterilized at an early age are more prone to hip dysplasia. (Cornell University's College of

Veterinary Medicine)

Breed-specific effects of spay/neuter. A recent study conducted at the University of California Davis involving several hundred Golden Retrievers revealed that for the incidence of hip dysplasia, CCL tears, lymphosarcoma, hemangiosarcoma, and mast cell tumors, the rates were significantly higher in both males and females that were neutered or spayed compared with intact dogs.

Other health concerns. Early spaying or neutering is commonly associated with **urinary incontinence** in female dogs and has been linked to increased incidence of urethral sphincter incontinence in males.

Spayed or neutered Golden Retrievers are much more likely to develop **hypothyroidism**.

A cohort study of shelter dogs conducted by the College of Veterinary Medicine at Texas A&M University concluded that **infectious diseases** were more common in dogs that were spayed and neutered at under 24 weeks of age.

The AKC's Canine Health Foundation issued a report pointing to higher incidence of **adverse reactions to vaccines** in spayed and neutered dogs as well.

Among the reports and studies pointing to health concerns associated with early spaying and neutering, we also find mention of increased incidence of **behavior problems**, including noise phobias, fear behavior, aggression, and undesirable sexual behaviors.

Spay/Neuter. Is it *still* the responsible thing to do??

More on alternative spay/neuter methods

- [Laparoscopic Ovariectomy](#)
- [Zeuterin \(neuter by injection\)](#)
- [Ovary-sparing Spay Procedure](#)
- [WATCH: Dr. Karen Becker details what's wrong with typical spay/neuter operations \(25 minute video\)](#)