

Top 10 Reasons NOT to Fix Your Pet

by Heather Reimer, Virden Pet Network

Do any of these look familiar? Maybe you've heard them from friends. Maybe you've even used them yourself. They are the reasons most often given for not spaying or neutering a pet:

1. "It's too expensive. We can't afford it." At the Virden Animal Hospital, rates to spay or neuter your pet are very reasonable, ranging from \$65 to \$140 for cats and starting at \$112 for dogs – a bargain compared to the cost of feeding and caring for your pet's offspring and a lot easier than trying to find homes for all of them.
2. "Remove his WHAT? I couldn't do that to the poor little guy!" Usually this comes from men who are empathizing with their pet a bit too much. You'll feel better knowing that cats and dogs don't have sex for enjoyment. For them, it's a purely reproductive act driven by instinct, and they don't miss it when it's gone.
3. "Our pet is just so sweet and pretty, she'd make beautiful babies." I once felt that way about a cat. I kept one of her kittens and he grew into a terrible brat, completely unlike his mother. You just can't predict how these things will turn out. And if that isn't enough to convince you, try this: Take the number of kittens your pet will likely give birth to, multiply by the spay/neuter costs outlined above, add the costs of feeding and caring for them all... and then get over it.
4. "Our cat is only six months old. We're waiting until he/she gets older." At six months, your pet is already feeling those crazy teenage hormones and is old enough to make babies. Some vets sterilize cats and dogs as young as *8 weeks old*. Studies show that both males and females have less risk of certain cancers and infections if altered when young.
5. "Our cat is a boy, so if he makes babies it isn't our problem." Is that what you would tell your teenage son? It takes two to tango so neutering male pets is just as important as spaying the females. Bonus: it costs less, too.
6. "Surgery is dangerous, I'm afraid something will go wrong." Spay/neuter is one of the safest, most common procedures performed by vets.
7. "It'll be easy to find homes for the kittens. Farmers always want barn cats." There aren't enough barns in the world to accommodate all the unwanted cats. Besides, barn cats often have to fend for themselves without vet care and as a result live hard lives shortened by illness and injury.
8. "Fixing my pet will change his personality." True. It will change it for the better. He'll be less aggressive, less driven to search for females, and less likely to mark territory (ie: your stuff). And will likely be more affectionate.
9. "He'll get fat and lazy." If the pet is altered young enough, the procedure won't cause him/her to get fat. And you know the saying: "If your dog is fat, you don't get enough exercise!"
10. "I want my kids to see the miracle of birth." Then go online or subscribe to Animal Planet. The lesson they need most from you is responsible pet ownership, which includes not allowing animals to breed when shelters and pounds are overflowing with homeless pets.

So if your family is thinking about adopting, visit the Virden Pet Network online or call 748 6677 and adopt a stray.