

Facts and Myths About Neutering

Myth: *My dog will be embarrassed if he's neutered!*

Fact: We tend to anthropomorphize our pets, which leads to these types of conclusions. Most of the time, we tend to think that we would be embarrassed if this were done to us. This may be the case, but most assuredly, your dog will not care.

Myth: *I heard neutering makes them less active, but I want an active dog!*

Fact: Studies have shown that neutering greatly decreases the development of aggressive behaviors in dogs. Neutering dogs does tend to "slow them down," but not to the extent that they lose their enthusiasm for walks, hunting, or hiking. Rest be assured, your dog will still be able to do all the things you enjoy doing with him.

Your dog's surgery appointment is scheduled for:

Please have him here by 8 AM on that date. He can have as much water as he wants, but no food after 8 PM the night before.

Because the procedure does not involve abdominal surgery, he will be able to go home the afternoon of the procedure, after 3:45 PM.

Costs and Explanations

Dog Neuter

less than 12 mos.	\$228.26
older than 12 mos., under 90 lbs.	\$249.43
90 lbs. or greater	\$261.73

All expenses are expected to be paid in full at the time of discharge.

Explanation of Costs

Our charges include a discount ranging somewhere between \$110 to \$150. This discount is our donation to helping fight pet overpopulation. Normal surgical time charges are around \$4 per minute; nearly 100% of these charges are discounted.

IV catheterization and fluid delivery is performed for every neuter. This decreases the risk of problems with anesthesia as well as gives us a route to deliver emergency medications should problems develop. We also use several monitors to track your dog's heart rate, rhythm, blood pressure, and blood oxygenation.

We aggressively use pain control on all surgeries. Each dog receives pre-operative anti-inflammatories and morphine. All of our neuters also go home with several days of post-operative pain control medication.

Our clinic staffs two technicians to assist the doctor in surgery, giving us more eyes, ears, and hands to manage our patients. Including the surgeon, there are three highly-trained professionals present completely devoted to the well-being of your dog.

We are completely aware that there are low-cost options for this procedure in the Twin Ports. You have the right to know that there is an association between cost of care and quality of that care. We believe anesthesia and surgery are not casual medical procedures, and no clinic should ever sacrifice quality of care for volume. When your dog is under anesthesia, 100% of our focus is on his well-being and the prevention of complications.

Grand Avenue
Veterinary Clinic



Neutering Your Dog



Serving the healthcare needs of pets and their families in West Duluth and the Arrowhead region since 1985.

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There is a fair amount of confusion about the merits and drawbacks to neutering a male dog. We at Grand Avenue Veterinary Clinic hope you'll take this information into account.

SHOULD HE BE NEUTERED?

The only time your dog should not be neutered is if you absolutely know you are going to breed him. Millions of animals are euthanized year after year simply because there is no home for them. They sit for months in shelters hoping for a chance at life, and unfortunately there aren't enough people like you out there that are willing to take them home. Also, an un-neutered male dog can breed several females in a short amount of time, which can exponentially worsen the overpopulation problem.

Breeding a male dog responsibly involves an investment, and should revolve around two questions:

- 1 Is my dog of strong enough genetics that it warrants passing his genes on to offspring to better his breed?
- 2 Is my dog of appropriate temperament to breed?

If the answer to either of these questions is "no" then you should have your male dog neutered, plain and simple.

Many owners of male dogs who hesitate to have them neutered do so for concern over the dog's psyche. In fact, it is very common to identify with our pets, and thus we choose not to have him neutered because, "we wouldn't want it done to us."

As we know from the types of things dogs like to roll in, they are less than

worried about their appearance. Rest assured, your dog does not care about his post-surgical appearance.

There is no downside to neutering a dog. Consider the following benefits to sterilization:

- **Behavior Modification:** Male dogs that have been neutered will be less likely to mark with urination. More importantly, the elimination of testosterone from their system will often calm them down and make them less aggressive, especially towards other animals. A recent study showed a significant decrease in separation anxiety in neutered dogs. Intact male dogs have a tendency to wander, leading to an increased risk for things like being hit by a car.
- **Testicular Cancer:** Obviously, neutering a male completely eliminates the risk of testicular cancer.
- **Prostatic Disease:** Neutering eliminates the potential for prostatic infection.
- **Perianal Adenomas:** Intact male dogs can develop a kind of benign tumor around the rectum which will ulcerate, causing severe discomfort and pain. Neutering eliminates the hormonal cause of these tumors.

If you still have any doubt as to whether or not your dog should be neutered, you need to ask yourself one question: is there a reason it should not be sterilized? Unless you plan to breed your dog, there is simply no good reason to keep it intact.

WHEN SHOULD HE BE NEUTERED?

For most breeds we recommend spaying after the puppy vaccinations are completed but prior to the first heat, at 4-6 months of age.

For larger breeds, we recommend allowing them to go through puberty (around 6-9 months of age) to reduce the risk of hip dysplasia. Studies have suggested that dogs whose adult body weight exceeds 65 pounds require puberty to help their bones know when to stop growing at the appropriate time. Popular breeds such as Labrador Retrievers and Golden Retrievers and giant breeds like St. Bernards should be neutered at 9-11 months of age, after they become sexually mature.

It is important to note that any dog at any age can be sterilized. There is no "window of opportunity" that can be missed. It is often slightly more expensive to sterilize an older dog because the surgery is more labor-intensive. However, the benefits far outweigh the price.

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