



Do the right thing - protect your pet by neutering

Oak Tree Farm, Wetheral Shields, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA4 8JA. Tel: 01228 560082. Web: www.oaktreeanimals.org.uk

Registered Charity 1169511.

Why it's nicer to neuter!

Every year we are asked to take in more than 800 dogs and cats, by owners who can no longer care for them or by members of the public, other charities, or local councils who have found them. That's a real shame for the animals and people concerned. Like all animal charities, we are not in a position financially or capacity-wise to take in all those animals.



It's the big, grown up thing to do for everyone around you.

By neutering your pet, you are playing a vital part in ensuring that all dogs and cats have a loving home to call their own, and that strays are not roaming the streets, making noise at night, and that feral cat colonies do not develop.



It also demonstrates that you really love your pet.

We often hear people say "I love my dog/cat too much to neuter him/her". However, real love and concern for a pet is better demonstrated by doing everything one can to prevent them from harm.

By neutering your dog or cat you can reduce, and (in some cases if done early enough) eliminate, the risks of:

Testicular / Ovarian / womb / mammary / prostate cancers and some other tumours
Womb infections – "Pyometras" in female animals, which can easily become fatal if not treated (and are expensive to put right). It will also reduce the likelihood of your cat contracting one of several killer cat diseases.

It'll save you money.

It is very expensive to feed a litter of puppies and kittens, and we consistently hear that people's dreams of making a bit of extra cash from them rarely becomes a reality when they have to pay for food, vet costs, and other items; or when they find that they can only give the animals away, not sell them. Breeding animals for profit may also jeopardise benefit entitlement. And they need less food after neutering, so you'll save money there too.

Your pets will become easier to manage too.

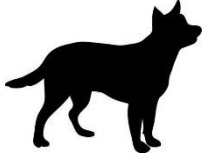
They will be less likely to call, mount, spray, roam, and all the other things associated with being randy (boys) and in heat (girls), such as attracting visits and attention from strays.



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Contrary to urban myth, they won't become fat and lazy.

Far from it – cats will still play and hunt, and dogs will still want to be walked. You need to feed them less food though once they are neutered as their bodies have less to do.

Neutering your pet will help reduce the number of animals suffering and dying.

We don't like to talk about it much, but in many parts of the UK, unwanted and stray animals are still euthanased as there are no homes for them. In our local area, there are hundreds if not thousands of feral cats living rough, whose kittens may not survive the first two months of life. And there are lots of animals having a rough time in private homes, whose owners never intended to get a dog or cat, but ended up with the unwanted results of an accidental breeding. If we all neutered our pets this wouldn't happen – indeed in several European countries with higher neutering rates than the UK, there are virtually no unwanted animals and shelters are empty.

Boys, it won't affect your virility.

Having a neutered male dog or cat does reduce the animal's ability to attract and do the business with mates, but not their human's. Real men neuter their pets.

There is help available if you can't afford it:

Contact the Dogs Trust on 020 7837 0006 or Cats Protection on 03000 121212 for information and assistance with the costs of neutering. Vouchers from these charities are accepted in many vet practices in Cumbria.

When should it be done?

Cats – ASAP! Cats can get pregnant from 3-4 months of age, can have 3 litters a year, and will readily mate with their brother/sister/mother/father. We recommend getting cats neutered by 4 months of age – or earlier. Our own cats on site are neutered at 8 weeks. There is no need to have a litter first – in fact it is safer not to.

You can find a list of vets who neuter at younger ages than the outdated 6 months, at this site: <http://www.kind.cats.org.uk/> (scroll down for a postcode finder)

Dogs – talk to your vet, the earlier the better in most cases.