ABOUT FRIENDS OF ANIMALS

Founded in 1957, Friends of Animals, Inc., is a non-profit animal advocacy organization that has led the effort to promote affordable spaying and neutering as the most effective means of preventing homelessness. Each year, FoA facilitates close to 35,000 sterilizations. Over the long run, FoA has successfully altered more than 2.7 million cats and dogs through our certificate program.

LOW-COST SPAY/NEUTER CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

Friends of Animals’ affordable spay/neuter certificates are available for purchase online or call 1-800-321-PETS for an order form. These certificates are honored by licensed veterinarians in hundreds of communities across the country. Please visit our website at Friendsofanimals.org for information and to order certificates.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Have your animals neutered or spayed. More than 3 million dogs and cats are killed in our nation’s pounds and shelters each year. This is a tragedy that we can prevent. Neuter or spay — don't delay. We rely on your generosity to keep our spay/neuter program as affordable as possible. All donations and bequests are tax-deductible as allowed by law.

Your support is vital.
777 Post Road | Darien, CT 06820
Tel: 203-656-1522 | Fax: 203-656-0267
Friendsofanimals.org

WHAT ARE SPAYING AND NEUTERING?

*Neutering* (orchectomy or castration) The surgical removal of the reproductive glands (testes) of a male animal.

*Spaying* (ovario-hysterectomy) The surgical removal of the reproductive organs (ovaries, uterus and fallopian tubes) of a female animal.

Puppies and kittens of both sexes should be spayed or neutered by six months of age. Female cats can go into estrus (“heat”) at as young as four months. More and more veterinarians are performing early-age spay/neuter procedures on animals as young as eight weeks of age to ensure the animal will never be at risk of accidental pregnancy or able to impregnate.

Vets who perform early-age spay/neuter report that the animals tend to recuperate more quickly as well, with a speedier healing time and less discomfort. The American Veterinary Medical Association endorses early-age spay/neuter. Older cats and dogs who are still intact should be altered as well, since they may remain fertile until 10 years of age or older.

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BE RESPONSIBLE, SPAY AND NEUTER

There are few greater joys than bringing a cat or dog into your home, and heart. But only if it’s not an impulse decision. Because with the joy of making an animal part of your family comes a longterm emotional and financial commitment to provide your new family member with the comforts and necessities needed for a healthy and content life. Sterilizing your animals through spaying and neutering is one of these necessities.

Since 1957, Friends of Animals has helped to make spaying and neutering more affordable through low-cost certificates—the most effective means of preventing abandonment, homelessness and routine killings of domestic animals.

All too often a pet's unplanned pregnancy results in his or her offspring being brought to shelters. And every year, millions of unwanted dogs and cats, including puppies and kittens, are euthanized at shelters. Other animals are abandoned on the streets, where a dangerous life and early death are practically guaranteed. Most abandoned animals starve or freeze to death, contract disease through their contact with garbage or other ill animals, are killed by cars or fall victims to other torturous deaths.

The perils of pet homelessness that can be nullified by spaying and neutering are illustrated in Friends of Animals’ new two-minute video featuring actor Danny Trejo—best known for his tough-guy roles in hits like “Machete” and “Breaking Bad”—as a street dog that winds up behind bars. From dumpster diving with his cat buddy to showing us the ropes of dog gang life, his story underscores the unfortunate plight of homeless cats and dogs in America. The video can be seen at Friendsofanimals.org. The good news, though, is that responsible pet owners can make a difference.

MYTH VS. FACT

MYTH: It is unnatural to interfere with an animal’s reproductive cycle. FACT: Humans interfered with nature when we domesticated dogs and cats. In doing so, we helped create the homeless animal crisis that now results in approximately three million dogs and cats being killed in pounds and shelters a year. We must now take responsibility for solving this crisis.

MYTH: It’s healthier for a female to have one litter before she is spayed. FACT: A female should ideally be spayed before her first estrus cycle. Early-age spaying (as young as eight weeks) greatly reduces the likelihood of mammary tumors, uterine infections, and of course, unplanned pregnancy.

MYTH: Males don’t need to be neutered since females have the litters. FACT: Unaltered males are half of the overpopulation equation. In fact, all it takes is one intact male to impregnate several females. On average, a fertile female dog bears one litter of four to six puppies per year; a fertile female cat, two litters of four to six kittens. The numbers balloon exponentially. Just one litter of kittens can then produce 54 offspring in a single year.

MYTH: A female dog or cat only comes into heat once a year.

FACT: Dogs go into heat, which lasts about three weeks, once or twice a year at as early as six months of age. Cats experience heat every 34 weeks from early spring through fall, starting as young as four months. Pregnancy for both cats and dogs lasts 63 days, and female cats can become pregnant as soon as 10 days after giving birth, while still nursing.

FACT: Dogs and cats can safely be spayed while in heat. FACT: Dogs and cats can safely be spayed while in heat or pregnant. Trust in the judgment of your veterinarian.

FACT: Spaying/neutering is expensive. FACT: Spaying or neutering actually saves you money. The cost is less than for the major surgeries and treatments that may be needed if your animal is left unaltered, such as those addressing preventable cancers. You'll pay far more in money and time taking care of and finding homes for puppies or kittens. Also, spaying and neutering benefits the community by curbing the number of animals who end up as strays or in pounds, where taxpayers pay to have them cared for and sometimes killed. Many areas have low-cost spay/neuter clinics or programs; Friends of Animals offers affordable spay/neuter procedures through our network of participating veterinarians.

Visit Friendsofanimals.org or call 1-800-321-PETS for more information.

THE BENEFITS OF SPAYING AND NEUTERING

Early spaying of female dogs and cats can help protect them from some serious health problems later in life such as uterine infections and breast cancer. Neutering your male pet can also lessen its risk of developing prostate and testicular cancer. The earlier a dog or cat is altered, the lower the risk. An animal neutered before six months has almost 100 percent chance of living prostate or ovarian cancer free.

Spaying also eliminates heat cycles and generally reduces the unwanted behaviors that may lead to owner frustration, which can lead to abandonment. Male cats are far less likely to “mark” their territory, particularly if neutered by six months. Neutering male dogs and cats reduces the breeding instinct making them less inclined to roam and more content to stay at home. It can also have a calming effect, leading to fewer fights and consequently lowering the risk of injury or contracting contagious diseases.

Spaying and neutering is one of these necessities.

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FACT: An animal becomes overweight and/or lazy when neutered. FACT: Animals’ appetites may increase, but they become overweight from being provided too much food and not enough exercise.

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