

**- Isn't it wrong to deprive an animal of the natural right to reproduce?**

With domestication, we have selectively changed animals' nature. Domesticated animals share the human environment, and their well being is dependent on our care. It's wrong to allow these animals to produce thousands of unwanted offspring that are eventually killed because there aren't enough responsible homes.

**- If I find homes for my pets' litters then I won't contribute to the problem.**

Only a limited number of people want pets. So every home you find for your pet's offspring takes away a home from a loving animal already at a shelter.

**- Shouldn't every female pet have at least one litter before being spayed?**

No. In fact, your pet will be healthier if she never sexually matures. Plus it's not easy to find good homes for a litter of pups/kittens. Then again, even if you find a home for your pet's offspring, this means one less home for animals already at a shelter.

**- Shouldn't children experience birth?**

A more important lesson to teach your child would be responsible pet ownership and concern for life, by explaining why their pet should not have babies.

**- Doesn't neutering alter an animal's personality?**

Personality changes that may result from neutering are for the better. Preventing the instinctual need to find a mate helps your pet stop roaming and become calmer; though not less protective of their territory.

**- Won't animal shelters take care of the surplus animals?**

No. Shelters do their best to place animals in loving homes, but the number of homeless animals far exceeds the number of available homes. This leaves many loving and healthy animals in our community that must be euthanised as the only humane solution to this tragic dilemma. ***Only birth control can end the overpopulation problem.***

**Not only cats and dogs...**

Animals of all kinds are becoming increasingly common in Irish households, from rabbits to hamsters to birds and reptiles. In some cases it can be even more difficult to find homes for their litters, as they can produce an even larger number of babies than dogs or cats! Plus fewer homes are prepared to adopt them, often shelters are already full, and there is a lack of facilities available.

It's therefore very important to limit the birth of 'exotic' animals. One way to do so is to house male and female separately, and/or keep same-sex pairs when possible – so as to provide your pet with some company (if it is a social species), without the risk of unwanted reproduction. Alternatively, sterilisation is also available for some species, including rabbits, ferrets, and guinea pigs. Ask your vet for info.



**WHY  
NEUTER or SPAY  
YOUR PET?**



Contact details for the Kilkenny SPCA  
Tel.: 056 7771635  
Email: [info@kilkennyspca.ie](mailto:info@kilkennyspca.ie)  
Visit our website: [www.kilkennyspca.ie](http://www.kilkennyspca.ie)

### **What does it mean?**

**Spaying** is a term used to describe the surgical removal of ovaries and uterus (ovario-hysterectomy) of a female animal.

**Neutering** is a term used to describe the castration - removal of testicles - of a male animal. However, neutering can be used in reference to both genders.

The surgical procedure, performed by a veterinarian under general anaesthesia, renders the animal *unable to reproduce*. Analgesia (pain control) is also normally offered.

### **When?**

Both procedures can be performed as early as six weeks of age. Early neutering by six months of age is recommended since this guarantees that the animals will not be able to breed and over-populate a community.

### **Why?**

Estimates across the country indicate that over more than 16,000 dogs alone are euthanised in Irish pounds each year. Having your pet neutered ensures that you will not be adding to this unnecessary and tragic waste of lives.

### **Health benefits**

Through neutering, you can help your dog and cat live a happier, healthier, and longer life. Early neutering prevents uterine infections (*pyometra*) as well as mammary, uterine, ovarian, and testicular cancer. Additionally, the procedure may eliminate or curb undesirable behaviours such as the crying and nervous pacing of a cat in heat, urine spraying, and roaming in search of a

mate and sexual mounting in males. In turn, cats and dogs which are less prone to roaming are also less likely to be lost, stolen, or hit by a car.

If you have more than one pet in your household, all the pets will get along better if they are neutered.

### **Alternatives**

Be aware that there are also both surgical (vasectomy, tubal ligation) and non-surgical alternatives (injectable) to neutering for birth control. Ask your vet for information.

### **Myths about neutering:**

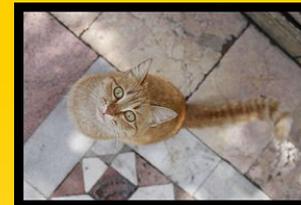
#### **- Neutering costs too much!**

The cost of caring for a pet, including providing veterinary care, should be considered before acquiring an animal. Consider that the costs of having a litter are often more than the cost of neutering, as there could be complications requiring hospitalization or surgery. You will be faced with finding homes or keeping the offspring yourself or placing more animals into your local shelter. The cost of the well-being of not just your companion animal but of future generations should be considered.

#### **- Neutering/spaying leads to obesity**

Pets can become overweight and less active as a result of overeating and lack of exercise rather than as a direct result of neutering.

*In 9 years, a couple of unneutered cats and all their offspring can produce almost 12 million cats!*



*In 7 years, 1 unspayed dog and all her offspring can produce more than 4 million dogs!*

***Your dog and/or cat - either male or female - should be spayed and neutered, unless you plan to breed them in a responsible and caring way***

The Kilkenny SPCA operates a Subsidised Neutering Scheme with some of the local vets to assist with the cost of the operation (neutering and spaying in cats, dogs, and other animals) in certain cases.

**Neutering Vouchers** can save you at least **1/3rd**, possibly **2/3rd** depending on your circumstances (the latter applies to unemployed and senior citizens).

Please contact us for more information on neutering and our voucher/assistance scheme on:

Kilkenny SPCA  
Tel: 056 7771635

Email: [info@kilkennyspca.ie](mailto:info@kilkennyspca.ie)  
website: [www.kilkennyspca.ie](http://www.kilkennyspca.ie)