

# Hawkins Animal Hospital

## SPAYING AND NEUTERING OF OUR PETS

This week I have lost two very special patients. The first was a dog with prostatic disease and, the second, a dog with an infection in the uterus-called pyometra. The sadness this week has prompted me to write about spaying and neutering of pets. I will simplify this and mention the benefits and hazards of not doing so.

With regard to female pets, it is beneficial to spay them because it protects them from the development of ovarian cancer, infections in the uterus, breast cancer and unwanted pregnancy. Neutering of male pets prevents unwanted behaviours such as urine marking in the house, running away from home in pursuit of females and mounting. In addition, it tends to calm behavior. From a health stand point it protects from prostatic disease, testicular and anal cancer.

Some clients have told me that they feel that they must allow their pet to have babies "because it will make them a better pet". This is simply a fallacy. Other clients feel that it will provide their children with the "birthing experience." These are not valid reasons to delay neutering and spaying.

There are many more types of educational themes, which are available to parents and schools, which address the child's need to learn about birthing.

We do not need more pets in this world. The humane societies will agree that thousands and thousands of pets, worldwide, are euthanized yearly because of the pet overpopulation, and I find that heartbreaking. This is the reason that many SPCA organizations advocate early spay and neutering programs (at 8 weeks)

Wishing you all a happy and safe summer.