



3948 W Alexis Road, Toledo, OH 43623 • Phone 419-266-5607 • Fax 888-414-1944 • humaneohio.org

HUMANE OHIO

Humane Ohio operates a low-cost spay/neuter clinic and a pet food bank. Our vision is a community without homeless pets where every resident has access to affordable spay/neuter.

SPAY/NEUTER

Question #1: Will my pet get fat and lazy if she/he is spayed/neutered?

No, that's a myth. Most pets get fat and lazy because they are overfed and/or don't get enough exercise. Spaying/neutering at the youngest age possible (please refer to question/answer #11) – before your pet has reached sexual maturity – usually has no effect on weight. Pets who are spayed/neutered will be just as playful and energetic after spay/neuter as they were before.

Question #2: Will spaying/neutering make my dog less “protective” or make my male pet feel like “less” of a male? Will it change my pet’s personality?

No, these are myths too. Spaying/ neutering does not affect a pet's natural instinct to protect the home and the family, and pets don't have any concept of sexual identity or ego. A pet's personality is formed more by genetics and his environment than by sex hormones so spaying/neutering will not change a pet's basic personality or make him suffer any kind of emotional reaction or identity crisis.

Question #3: Isn't it better for my pet to have one litter before I get her spayed?

No, that's a myth! Medical evidence shows that female pets that are spayed before their first heat are typically healthier in the long run. Waiting for your pet to reach sexual maturity and have a litter before spay/neuter allows the development of bad behavioral habits associated with breeding such as marking/spraying, territory aggression, fighting and roaming AND predisposes them to a laundry list of **costly**, even deadly, medical conditions that could be avoided with spay/neuter.

Question #4: Doesn't my pet have the right to experience sex?

Sex, for an animal, is nothing more than the result of a powerful instinctive drive to reproduce. Please do not confuse human emotions and desires with animal behavior; Bruiser doesn't care whether he has testicles or sex or not.

Question #5: Isn't it a good idea for my children to experience the “miracle of birth?”

By allowing your pet to give birth, you are contributing to pet homelessness (please refer to question/answer #12 for more information). Explain to your children that preventing the birth of some pets can save the lives of others and consider fostering a pregnant animal from a shelter or rescue group if you still feel they need to see the “miracle of birth.”

Pets often have their litters in the middle of the night or in a place of their own choosing. Because pets need privacy when giving birth, any unnecessary intrusion can cause the mother to become seriously upset. These intrusions can result in an unwillingness to care for the offspring or an injury to the owners, the pet or the newborns.

Question #6: What do "spay" & "neuter" mean?

Female dogs and cats are spayed by removing their reproductive organs, and male dogs and cats are neutered by removing their testicles. In both cases, the operation is performed while the pet is under anesthesia.

Question #7: Why should I spay or neuter my pet?

Spaying/neutering is the only way to eliminate pet homelessness! Plus, it's good for you, your pet and the community!

SPAY/NEUTER

Question #8: How is spaying/neutering good for the pet and the pet owner?

Spaying/neutering can lower veterinary bills! Fixed pets are less prone to a variety of diseases. Spayed females have a lower risk of breast cancer (90% fatal in cats and 50% fatal in dogs) and life-threatening uterine infections. Neutered males have no risk of testicular disease and a lower risk of prostate diseases. Plus, the cost to have your pet spayed or neutered at Humane Ohio's low-cost spay/neuter clinic is a lot less than the cost to have and care for a litter or litters.

Spaying/neutering can lead to better pet behavior! A spayed female won't go into heat which will prevent yowling, frequent urination and discharge. Neutered males are usually better behaved and will not feel the need to mark their territory. A neutered male won't be as inclined to roam in search of a mate; roaming animals can cause vehicular accidents and scare children.

Spaying/neutering can prevent fights between pets. Fights between pets can be serious, causing deep wounds and transmitting deadly diseases. Neutered males tend to be less aggressive to both animals and people, especially if neutered at an early age.

Question #9: How is spaying/neutering good for the community?

If more pets are spayed/neutered, there will be less stray, homeless, unwanted animals. Communities spend millions of dollars to control unwanted animals. Stray and roaming (a behavior associated with breeding) animals can cause dog bites and attacks. Stray and homeless animals get into trash containers, or defecate in public areas or on private lawns. Spaying/neutering prevents unwanted litters and keeps more animals off the streets and out of already overburdened animal shelters and rescue groups.

Question #10: When and how often can animals breed?

Female cats can breed three times a year and have an average of four kittens per litter. Dogs can breed twice a year and have an average of 6 – 10 puppies per litter. Female cats can breed as early as four months and dogs as early as six months!

Question #11: At what age is it safe to spay/neuter?

Humane Ohio will spay/neuter kittens when they're eight weeks old and at least 2 lbs, and puppies when they're eight weeks old and at least 2 – 4 lbs depending on the breed. It's a myth that you can't spay/neuter kittens and puppies when they're so young – they actually bounce back from spay/neuter surgery very quickly! Pediatric spay/neuter is safe and is less stressful on the animal than waiting until they're older.

Question #12: I know I can find good homes for all the puppies/kittens – especially if they're purebreds – so what's the problem?

For every human born in the United States, 45 cats and 15 dogs will be born. 6 – 8 million dogs and cats are waiting in shelters across the country; 25% of shelter animals are purebreds. About half will be euthanized because there simply aren't enough homes (according to Alley Cat Allies, seven out of 10 cats who enter shelters nationally are killed there). Every home found for one of your pet's offspring – purebred or not – takes a home away from a purebred or mixed breed dog or cat waiting in a shelter. And, in less than one year's time, each of your pet's offspring may have his or her own litter, contributing to the pet homelessness problem even further. The problem of pet homelessness is created and perpetuated one puppy/kitten and one litter at a time. Plus, there's no guarantee that the homes you find will be forever homes and your pet's offspring or their future generations could end up abandoned on the streets or euthanized in overcrowded animal shelters.

Question #13: My dog/cat is so special! Doesn't it make sense to want a puppy/kitten just like her?

A dog or cat may be a great pet and family member, but that doesn't mean his/her offspring will be a carbon copy! Professional animal breeders who follow generations of bloodlines can't guarantee they will get just what they want out of a particular litter. A pet owner's chances are even slimmer. In fact, an entire litter of puppies or kittens might get all of a pet's (and/or her mate's) worst characteristics!

Question #14: What if I can't afford the cost to have my pet spayed/neutered?

Humane Ohio can help! We are a non-profit, low-cost spay/neuter clinic. We serve all pet owners, people caring for outdoor community cats, animal shelters and rescue groups in Ohio and Michigan. Please call us even if you think you can't afford it; as a non-profit organization, we sometimes have private donations and grant money and can offer further financial assistance.

The cost to have your pet spayed/neutered is a one-time cost that is much less expensive than the cost to have and care for a litter or litters. Plus, the health and behavioral benefits to your pet will save on veterinary bills and training/behaviorist fees.