

**Del Ray Animal Hospital**  
**524 E. Mount Ida Ave.**  
**Alexandria, VA 22301**  
**(703) 739-0000**  
**[www.delrayanimalhospital.com](http://www.delrayanimalhospital.com)**

### **Important Reasons to Spay or Neuter your Pet**

More than 4 million pets are euthanized in U.S. shelters each year simply because they have no home. Many are puppies and kittens less than six months old. Help stop this needless loss of life. Please spay or neuter your pet.

#### **Common myths:**

Spaying or neutering your pet does not cause laziness or hyperactivity, reduce its instinct to protect your family and home, cause immature behaviors, postpone or delay normal behavioral maturity, alter its personality in any manner, or cause obesity.

#### **Spaying your female pet:**

An ovariectomy involves removal of the ovaries and uterus. Ideal age is 4 to 6 months.

If your dog is spayed before the first heat cycle, your pet has a less than 1 percent chance of developing breast cancer. This chance increases to 8 percent if your dog has one heat cycle prior to spaying. If spayed after two heat cycles, the risk increases to 26 percent.

Pets with diabetes or epilepsy should be spayed to prevent hormone changes that may interfere with medication.

Eliminates the risk of ovarian and uterine cancer.

Eliminates unwanted pregnancies.

#### **Neutering your male pet:**

Castration involves removal of the testicles and spermatic cord. Ideal age is 4 to 6 months.

Eliminates the risk of testicular cancer.

Greatly reduces the risk of prostatitis and perianal tumors.

Reduces roaming and fighting.

Eliminates or reduces spraying or marking in males neutered before six months of age or before the onset of these behaviors.

Eliminates the risk and spread of sexually transmitted diseases.

Eliminates unwanted litters.