



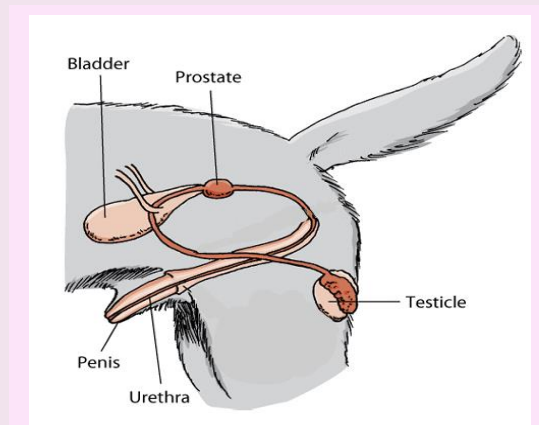
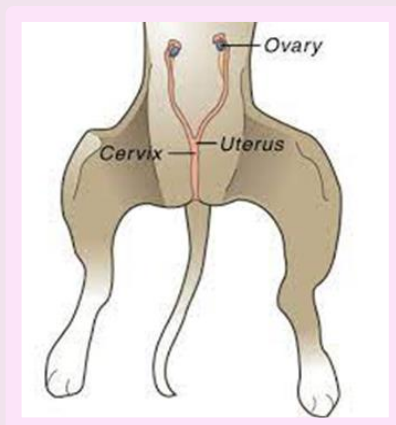
Desexing of Dogs and Cats

Why do we recommend desexing?

Desexing your pet is a huge part of being a responsible pet owner. Shelters are full, and apart from adding to the overpopulation of unwanted puppies and kittens, there are no health benefits to allowing your pet to have a litter.

In female dogs and cats who are not desexed, that is, those who remain 'entire', the risks of developing potentially fatal mammary (breast) cancers and uterine infections (pyometra) are extremely high. This risk increases with each heat or season they have. Other cancers of the reproductive system are also common, and of course cannot occur if these organs are no longer present.

Entire male dogs are at greater risk of testicular and prostate cancers, aggressive and antisocial behaviour towards humans and other animals, and are far more likely to roam or escape. Entire male cats have extremely smelly urine and are more likely to roam and fight.



Are there any special considerations for different breeds?

There is increasing evidence to suggest that it is appropriate for some dog breeds to wait until they are a little older before being desexed. This recommendation applies to large and giant breed male and female dogs. As these breeds take longer to reach full maturity, a short wait allows them longer exposure to the hormones responsible for maturation and growth of the musculoskeletal system, leading to stronger bones, joints, and ligaments. The best age for desexing does vary from breed to breed, as well as with individual circumstances, and must always be weighed against the risks associated with delayed desexing. Your vet will be able to give you advice tailored to your individual pet's needs.

What happens during your pet's stay at The Vet Clinic?

Your pet will be admitted to hospital in the morning. Our admissions nurse will talk you through the procedure and the consent form, and explain any options to you. Once admitted, your pet will be given a comfortable bed in their very own cage. At The Vet Clinic, we have a separate cat ward to help cats feel safe and secure away from dogs and high traffic areas.

Our surgical team will give your pet a full and thorough physical exam to make sure they are fit and well for surgery. An intravenous catheter will be inserted into the vein in their front leg. Blood will be taken for preanaesthetic testing at this time (if this option has been chosen). A premedication dose will be calculated for your pet based on their individual needs, and will usually be given approximately half an hour prior to their procedure.

When the team is ready to perform your animal's procedure, your pet will be moved into the operating theatre, and an induction anaesthetic will be given intravenously. Your pet will have a breathing tube inserted into their windpipe, which connects to the anaesthetic machine to provide oxygen and anaesthetic gas directly to your pet's lungs. Intravenous fluids will be provided through the catheter in their front leg.

A full suite of monitoring and safety equipment will be used to help our surgical and anaesthetic nurse ensure your pet is comfortable and stable under anaesthesia for the duration of the procedure. At The Vet Clinic, we monitor blood pressure, blood oxygen saturation, expired carbon dioxide, ECG, core body temperature, breathing rate, heart rate, and anaesthesia depth. We provide external heating and lots of padding on our surgical table to keep your pet as warm and comfortable as possible.

Once the procedure is completed, our surgical and anaesthetic nurse will remain with your pet until they have completely recovered from their anaesthetic, and have woken up in their bed. Once they have started to regain consciousness, their breathing tube is removed and they are moved to a heated recovery bed when they are beginning to lift their head.

Once fully recovered and able to move about, they will receive additional pain relief, and dogs will be taken for a walk outside to toilet. It is then that we will contact you to let you know when you can come to the clinic to collect your pet. When your pet is discharged in the afternoon, their surgical nurse will discuss the procedure with you in detail, and go through all the information you need to know regarding their post operative care. An appointment will usually be made to check your pet's incision in a few days' time.

What is involved in a cat castration?

Male cats are usually straight forward. Following a full physical exam, they will receive their anaesthetic as an injection into the muscle. This medication is a combination of sedatives, anaesthetics, and pain relief. When they are asleep and positioned on their back, the fur is clipped from the testicles and a sterile antibacterial surgical prep solution is applied. A single incision is made in the scrotum over the testis, and the testis is removed. The cord and vessels are tied together several times and the testis is cut away. The cords are replaced into the scrotum and the procedure is repeated for the other testis. The incision is left open to heal; no stitches are required. Male cats then receive another injection, which reverses the anaesthetic and allows them to slowly wake up.

What is involved in a dog castration?

Dogs are a little different to cats, and require the use of a gaseous anaesthetic and a full sterile surgical kit. As for cats, the dog is placed on his back, and the fur around his testicles and penis is clipped. The incision is made in front of the scrotum, over the penis, and the cords are ligated (tied very tightly) with suture, usually two or three times. The testis is then cut away, and the incision stitched closed in several layers. Your dog may or may not have external skin stitches.

What is involved in a cat spay?

Desexing of female cats and dogs is a complicated surgery. Whilst it is routine, it is not easy! However, our vets do so many that we quickly become very good at it! Following clipping and prepping of the abdomen, a short incision is made in the belly, usually a couple of centimetres in length. The Y shaped uterus is located deep in the tail end of the abdomen and can sometimes be quite hard to find. We work with one side of the Y at a time. We locate and clamp the ovary, and place several ligatures under it, allowing us to cut it away from the body. We then repeat this on the other side. Similar ligatures are applied to the uterus itself (the long part of the Y), and the entire organ including uterus and both ovaries are removed. The incision is then closed in several layers - the body wall, the muscle layer, the fat layer, and the skin. Female cats may have external or buried stitches.

What is involved in a dog spay?

The procedure for desexing female dogs is the same as for female cats, but can at times be a very involved and technically difficult procedure. Although many dogs may not look overweight from the outside, they can have very large amounts of fat inside their abdomen that can make everything very slippery and very hard to see. Dogs also have a lot of large blood vessels requiring multiple ligatures. Larger dogs are more difficult than smaller dogs, and older and deep chested dogs can be very tricky. Dogs who are overweight are also more difficult. Sometimes it may even take two vets together to desex a female dog.

What happens if my pet is in season, pregnant, or feeding babies?

We generally do not recommend desexing your pet if they are in season, are pregnant, or are feeding babies. While it is certainly possible, the surgery is more technically difficult, and the risks to your pet are greater. This especially applies to dogs. If you would like to have your pet desexed, but feel they may be in season or pregnant, or they are feeding, please chat to our nursing team about the options that may be best for your pet and your individual circumstances.

What are the costs involved?

Castrations are less costly than speys as they are quicker and less invasive. However, all desexing procedures require a full general anaesthetic, multiple medications, and specialised training and equipment.

Costs will vary according to options chosen (eg, preanaesthetic blood testing, microchip implantation, vaccinations), and surgical considerations (eg, bodyweight, mature age surcharge, pregnancy/in heat surcharge, obesity surcharge).

Is there any special after care?

For male cats, monitoring of the incision, appetite, and general demeanour is all that is required. We ask that they are kept inside for 2-3 days following the surgery.

For female dogs and cats, and for male dogs, post operative care is similar. Your pet should be kept indoors, and remain very quiet and rested for 10-14 days. It is really important that they are not allowed to run or jump, as this may cause them to open up their incision, which may necessitate an emergency surgery! They should be kept warm and comfortable, especially for the first 48 hours or so. They will be sent home with an Elizabethan collar so that they cannot lick at their sutures or incision. Pain relief medication will be sent with your pet to be given at home with food for several days. They will be required to return for a post operative check and/or suture removal within 2 weeks - your nurse will advise.

A post op discharge appointment will be made with you so that your pet's surgical nurse can discuss the procedure and after care with you when you come to collect your pet.

How do I book this procedure?

Please give The Vet Clinic a call 6 days a week to speak with our lovely nurses. They can advise on the best timing of desexing for your pet, let you know the costs involved, and can make an appointment for your pet's procedure at your convenience.