



## Neutering Male Dogs

Neutering (castration) is surgical removal of both testicles under general anaesthetic. Farm animals are castrated to prevent unacceptable sexual behaviour, aggression, and inappropriate breeding. Castrating dogs is safe and has no detrimental effects on health or behaviour, regardless of the patient's age. The surgery can be done from about 4 months of age.

### Medical Benefits

Testicular cancer is the second most common cancer in male dogs. Castration eliminates the possibility of it developing and greatly reduces the risk of prostatic disease, an extremely common and serious disease of older dogs. The risk of perianal tumours and perineal hernia is also reduced.

### Aggression

Behaviour "driven" by male hormones is reduced or eliminated. Once castrated, male-behaviour may diminish over a few days, or gradually over a few months. Castration does not necessarily "calm" an excitable dog. Weight gain or laziness is not a side-effect but results overfeeding or under-exercised. Aggression influenced by male hormones may be reduced or eliminated.

### Urine Marking

Adult male dogs mark vertical objects by passing urine on them. Some males have such a strong desire to mark that they do it indoors. Castration reduces marking in 80% of dogs with a marked improvement in 40%.

### Retained Testicles

Before or shortly after birth the testicles descend into the scrotum. In some dogs one or both do not descend fully. The retained testicle(s) remain anywhere between the abdominal cavity and scrotum. These are sterile, but produce hormone so the dog behaves as an entire male dog. Retained testicles are 13 times more likely to become cancerous and should be removed. Neutering also prevents this inherited defect being passed on.

### Surgery

There is a small risk associated with anaesthesia and surgery in all patients. Older patients may need a physical examination, blood and or urine tests, and or an ECG before surgery to assess health. Most young and healthy patients recover without incident. Some patients need to be prevented from licking or biting at the incision or sutures. If this happens, a Buster collar is required. Surgeries are performed Monday to Friday by appointment only.

### BEHAVIOURAL BENEFITS OF CASTRATION

- Reduced aggression toward other dogs in a household in 1/3 of cases.
- Reduced aggression towards people in the family in 30% of cases.
- Reduced aggression towards unfamiliar dogs in 20% of cases.
- Reduced aggression towards unfamiliar people in 10% of cases.
- Roaming; there is a moderate improvement in 70% of dogs and a marked improvement in 40%
- For mounting there is a moderate improvement in 70% of dogs with a marked improvement in 25%.
- Castration reduces marking in 80% of dogs. with a marked improvement in 40%.
- Attraction to female dogs and masturbation can be reduced or eliminated by castration.