



Breeding Your Dog: Facts and Myths

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If you are thinking of breeding your pet, you need to consider the costs, risks and responsibilities of bringing puppies into the world. Not only will you have to worry about the offspring but also the extra work of having an unaltered pet. If you have a female, you will need to use sanitary products during her heat cycle and keep her isolated during that time. Unaltered males are more likely to roam to seek a mate, and also be more territorial.

Myth: Spaying My Dog Will Make Her Fat.

Spay surgery will make your dog's mood more stable as she doesn't have to deal with heat cycles. The only thing that will make her fat is too much food and not enough exercise. Spayed females may have an increase in appetite, but you still control how much food she receives.

Fact: Altered Pets Live Longer Lives.

Neutered dogs are less likely to roam thus reducing the chance of them getting lost or hit by a car. Also, they will not be susceptible to testicular cancer or be as likely to bite. Spayed females have a reduced risk of breast cancer and other cancers of the reproductive organs. Females can also die or become ill while giving birth so if they are spayed, that risk is gone.

Fact: It is Less Expensive to Own an Altered Pet.

It is much less expensive to license an altered animal in Pima County. If you have a female dog you will not need to worry about buying products to keep your pet clean during heat cycles. You will not have to devote so much time to cleaning the area where your female dog sits or sleeps. Your vet bills will be less expensive because you will not have to take your female and her puppies to the vet for checkups.

Myth: You Shouldn't Spay or Neuter Before the Dog is 6 Months Old.

The earlier you get your dog altered, the better. Male dogs, if they are spayed early enough, are less likely to become aggressive or have a territorial urine-marking problem. It is beneficial to neuter your dog before their testosterone level peaks at around 10 months. Females do not need to wait until after their first heat cycle. That is just a myth.

Myth: Sterilization Surgery is Dangerous.

Spaying and neutering is routine surgery for most vets. Complications are kept to a minimum. Make sure you trust your vet and inspect the office before allowing your dog to go into surgery. Many places, including the Humane Society of Southern Arizona, offer low cost sterilization so cost should also not be a factor.

Fact: There is a Huge Pet Overpopulation Problem.

Many dogs and cats are euthanized every year because of a lack of space in shelters and rescues. Even though you may find homes for all the puppies, they may still end up at a shelter later in life. There are more than enough puppies and kittens born every year. Don't add to the overpopulation problem.

Call the Spay and Neuter Clinic at the Humane Society of Southern Arizona at 520-881-0321 to make an appointment to have your pet sterilized. The clinic is located at 3450 N. Kelvin Blvd., Tucson, AZ 85716.