



## Frequently Asked Questions and Eligibility Requirements

### What animals are eligible for spay or neuter surgery?

- Healthy adult cats and dogs under the age of 7
- Kittens that are at least 4 months old (>1kg) and puppies that are at least 10 weeks old (>5lbs).
- Female cats in heat.
- Healthy pregnant cats

*Note: For the health of your pet, we strongly recommend that he/she is vaccinated prior to surgery and we will request proof of vaccination at the time of drop-off. We recommend all core and any additional vaccines are provided at least two weeks before surgery to ensure immunity against these common diseases. These vaccines can be administered by your local veterinarian or you can request an appointment with the Toronto Humane Society's vaccination services (please visit the webpage for more information). Our policy requires all animals to be vaccinated prior to leaving the clinic if one's pet is not up to date with his/her vaccines. While we do not offer this service, pre-anesthetic bloodwork is always recommended before any surgical procedure for animals of all ages. This allows for discovery of any underlying conditions which can impact the safety of anesthetic procedure. Please contact your veterinarian if you wish to have this completed, and we welcome these medical records brought in along with the vaccination history the morning of the procedure. For additional information please feel free to contact us via email or call: 416-392-2273 x2*

### What animals are **NOT** eligible for spay and neuter surgery?

- **Animals not born in Canada.** Please visit your veterinarian to discuss endemic disease(s) specific to your pet's country of origin, and the potential impact these diseases may present to the safety of an anesthetic procedure.
- **Unhealthy or contagious cats and dogs.** This includes animals that are coughing, sneezing, displaying: watery eyes and runny noses, or have mange or ringworm.
- **Animals that have received steroids (*allergy medications are commonly steroids*) or other medications within the last two weeks.**
- **Very overweight or underweight cats and dogs. (Body condition scores: 1/9 – 3/9 or 8/9 - 9/9)**  
*Unsure if your animal is at an ideal body weight? Take a look at these helpful resources:*  
Dogs: <http://www.purina.co.uk/content/your-dog/helping-to-keep-your-dog-healthy/managing-your-dog's-weight/purina-dog-body-condition-tool>  
Cats: <http://www.purina.co.uk/content/your-cat/helping-to-keep-your-cat-healthy/managing-your-cat's-weight/purina-body-condition-tool>
- **Nursing cats and dogs.** (Puppies/kittens should be weaned (at approx. 6-8 weeks) before the mother can be spayed.)
- **Pregnant dogs.**
- **Large breed female dogs weighing over 40kg (80lbs),**
- **Deerhounds & Wolfhounds**
- **Any "teacup" breeds or dogs under 5 lbs.**
- **Large, deep-chested dogs: Great Danes (both adults and puppies)**  
These animals are high risk for bloat (**gastric dilatation and volvulus syndrome**). This often fatal condition can be surgically prevented at the time of sterilization. Please discuss the *gastropexy* procedure with your veterinarian. For more information visit: <http://www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?P=A&S=0&C=0&A=672>

- **Animals under six (6) months with retained testicles.** (*Animals over 6 months with testicles undescended will be done at the discretion of the attending veterinarian (only if the testicle is palpable at the time of surgery), and a \$20 fee will be applied*) For more information on this condition please visit: <http://www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?P=A&S=0&C=0&A=2743>
- **Animals seven (7) years of age and older**  
At 7 years of age these animals are now considered to be seniors, and with age comes the increased likelihood for emerging diseases/ conditions. These animals should have pre-anesthetic bloodwork completed and increased anesthetic support during surgery that cannot be offered in our high volume service.
- **Short-faced (brachycephalic) dog breeds such as: English Bulldogs, French Bulldogs, Pekingese, Pugs. Short-faced cat breeds such as: Persian cats, Himalayan cats**  
These animals carry an increased anesthetic risk as they are predisposed to obstructed airways due to their compressed facial structure. Animals with a higher anesthetic risk need increased monitoring during surgery which is not feasible in a high volume environment. To learn more about this condition visit: <http://www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?P=A&S=0&C=0&A=663>
- **Please note that any brachycephalic (short nosed/“smushed” faced) animals that are not on this list will have surgery at the attending veterinarian’s discretion.** We might request photos of your animals be sent to [spayneuter@torontohumanesociety.com](mailto:spayneuter@torontohumanesociety.com) to confirm your pets eligibility.

*\*\*All surgeries are at the discretion of the veterinarian the morning of surgery. Should they determine for any reason during the pre-surgical examination that your animal is unfit for surgery, the veterinarian reserves the right to deny the patient. As all of our patients receive a pre-surgical examination to ensure they are healthy enough to undergo the procedure, a \$25.00 examination fee will be applied if your animal is denied.\*\**

## What animals have a caution prior to surgery?

- **Female dogs in heat.** \*Will be completed at the veterinarian’s discretion. Please arrive as scheduled for your appointment and we will reschedule the appointment to the soonest availability in the event the surgery is declined.\*
- **Animals with neurological conditions.** Please ensure to notify us at the time of booking. Our operators will request a medical record and surgical clearance from your veterinarian be emailed to: [medicalrecords@torontohumanesociety.com](mailto:medicalrecords@torontohumanesociety.com). The appointment will remain pending until the medical records are reviewed by one of our veterinarians.
- The owners of the following breeds, while they can be accommodated, should also discuss **gastropexy** with their own veterinarian prior to spay/neuter surgery: **Standard Poodles, Weimaraners, Standard Poodles, Rottweilers, German Shepherds, Dobermans.**
- **Dobermans\*** will require a **Von Willebrands test** prior to surgery. This is an inherited disease that affects blood clotting and, if present, can lead to life-threatening bleeding after a surgical procedure.  
\*If your dog is **part Doberman** we strongly recommend you **still discuss the risk of Von Willebrands disease** with your veterinarian. Should your animal **present physically as primarily Doberman** it will be at the discretion of our veterinarians to request testing prior to being accepted for surgery.
- The following breeds: **Shar-peis, Boston Terriers, Bulldogs, Shih Tzus, and Boxers,** may present as **more brachycephalic than others.** Should your animal display the characteristics of the above denied breeds they too will be denied for surgery.
- **Animals with severely poor dental health.** While also painful and uncomfortable, poor dental health can have a negative effect on your pet’s organ functions and health.  
To treat this, regular brushing and professional dental cleaning may be required. Some veterinarians can offer to complete a dentistry (cleaning and removing rotted teeth) in addition to a neuter/spay, saving your pet from undergoing multiple anesthetic procedures. If your pet presents with poor dental health or **retained deciduous (baby)**

**teeth** then we may recommend you seek service from a veterinarian who can offer to complete both procedures at the same time.

*Unsure if your animal has dental disease? Take a look at these helpful articles:*

<http://www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?P=SRC&S=1&SourceID=13>

<http://www.petdental.ca/en-ca/dental-care-faqs.html>

- **FIV and feline leukemia positive animals must be in good health and not experiencing any other illnesses.** Caregivers are also recommended to seek vaccination service with their own veterinarian who can provide killed vaccines. The Toronto Humane Society's Vaccination Service uses modified live vaccines that can in theory initiate a low level of infection or illicit no immune response from felines affected with these viruses. Please talk to your veterinarian if this applies to your pet in order to make an informed decision about their vaccinations.

## **If I have more than one pet, do I need to submit more than one application form?**

Each pet requires its own application, which will remain part of its medical record.

## **How does spaying or neutering my cat prevent reproduction?**

In **female** cats and dogs, the uterus and ovaries are removed through a small incision in the abdominal wall. After the surgery, females will be unable to get pregnant.

In **male** cats and dogs, the testicles are removed but the scrotum remains. Removal of the testicles prevents production of sperm resulting in a male that cannot produce young.

## **Will my cat be unable to reproduce immediately after surgery?**

**Female cats and dogs** will be unable to reproduce as soon as the surgery is complete. They will have no reproductive organs remaining.

**Male cats and dogs** will have their testicles removed but there will be sperm and testosterone in their systems for up to three weeks post-surgery.

## **What are the benefits of spaying or neutering my pets?**

- It **reduces or removes the risk of disease, infection and cancer** of the pet's reproductive system i.e. mammary cancer, prostate cancer, uterus infection (pyometra).
- **Female heat cycles are eliminated.**
- Male cats may **no longer spray or smell**, male dogs may **urine mark less frequently** on walks.
- It **ends the cat's crying, howling, fighting and frantic efforts to get out**, and may **decrease a dog's urge to run away** in search of opportunity to mate.
- Spaying and neutering can **make your pet more laid back and affectionate** by decreasing hormonally related aggression issues.
- Spayed and neutered pets have been proven to **live longer lives**. Male neutered cats for example live 62% longer than unneutered toms.
- It reduces pet overpopulation and the thousands of homeless and unwanted animals that end up in rescue organizations & shelters each year.