



West Suburban Humane Society

STRAY THOUGHTS

Happy Valentines Day
from the
animals at WSHS!

Save a Life — Spay or Neuter

February 28th is Spay Day USA. On this day, shelters across America are offering low cost spay/neuter certificates to encourage people to have their dog or cat spayed or neutered. West Suburban Humane Society will be offering these certificates not only on that day but throughout the year as well.

Many people do not realize the importance of spaying or neutering their pet. Some frequently asked questions about spaying and neutering and their answers appear below.

Q: What are spaying and neutering?

Spaying and neutering are simple, safe surgical procedures that stop an animal from being able to have babies. Females are spayed, and males are neutered (although the word "neuter" may also be applied to a group of animals of mixed or unknown gender).

Q: Does spaying and neutering hurt?

Any discomfort an animal experiences is minimal, and well outweighs the suffering and death caused by uncurbed breeding. Veterinarians perform spay and neuter surgeries under a general anesthetic. Animals usually return to normal activity within 24 to 72 hours. According to VetCentric.com, "most cats will heal very easily and quickly," and "most dogs show no signs of discomfort from the procedure." In fact, some dogs "may attempt to resume their normal level of activity immediately after surgery." This, of course, should be monitored to ensure that the animal does not aggravate the incision.

Q: Does spaying and neutering provide any other health benefits?

Yes. In both cats and dogs, spaying greatly reduces the risk of breast cancer and prevents various reproductive tract disorders. Neutering often resolves undesirable behaviors such as aggression, spraying, and roaming, and eliminates the risk of various testicular diseases.

Q: Can animals younger than six months of age be spayed or neutered?

Yes. Although animals have traditionally been altered at six months, many veterinarians are

now practicing pediatric (also known as "early-age") spay/neuter surgery, which can be performed on animals as young as six weeks. Doctors practicing this technique report that the surgery is significantly easier and quicker to perform; guardians who have had pediatric spay/neuter performed on their animals report fewer medical problems than those who have older animals altered; and spaying or neutering homeless animals before adopting them out is the best way to ensure unwanted births do not occur.

Q: Doesn't spaying and neutering make animals less protective?

No. Any changes brought about by spaying or neutering are generally positive. Neutered male cats usually stop territorial spraying. Neutered dogs and cats tend to fight less and are less likely to become lost due to straying from home in search of a mate. Spayed animals do not go into heat or need to be confined indoors to avoid pregnancy. Animals do not become less protective or loyal to their guardians as a result of being altered.

Q: Is it really necessary to neuter males? Males don't give birth!

The old saying "it takes two to tango" is as true for animals as it is for humans. Even if you are very careful to keep your male pet under control at all times, accidents do happen and he may escape. In fact, he will likely try repeatedly to escape, digging up your yard, scratching up your door, or chewing off his restraint in the process. Males roaming in search of a mate are susceptible to being injured by traffic and in fights with other males. And while a female cat or dog can only have one litter at a time, male animals can impregnate many females each day.

Q: Isn't spaying and neutering expensive?

Although to some animal guardians the cost of surgery may seem high initially, it's a real bargain when compared with the cost of raising a litter of puppies or kittens. Spaying and neutering also saves taxpayer dollars. According to a recent study,* it costs some shelters an average of \$176 to capture, house,

feed and eventually kill a homeless animal—a cost that ultimately comes out of all our pockets. Most important of all, when you consider the moral expense of killing millions of healthy, innocent beings whom many of us consider "best friends," the cost of spay/neuter surgery fades to insignificance.

* Wenstrup, John, and Alexis Dowidchuk, "Pet Overpopulation: Data and Measurement Issues in Shelters," *Journal of Applied Animal Welfare Science*, 2(4), 1999, 303-319.

The bottom line, when owning an animal, is you assume responsibility for that animal's well being. Spaying and neutering is as vital to your pet's health and happiness as routine physical examinations, good nutrition, grooming, playtime, and love. Before you adopt an animal, you need to seriously consider whether or not you are ready to take on the financial responsibility of properly caring for one. If you have already adopted an unaltered animal, it is your responsibility to have that animal spayed or neutered regardless of cost.

For more information on obtaining a low cost spay/neuter certificate, please contact the shelter at 630-960-9600, ext. 25 or visit our web site at www.WSHS-DG.org.

Save a life — please have your pet spayed or neutered!

Our Shelter Hours Are:

Weekdays:
11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Weekends:
11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Closed Wednesdays

Upcoming Events 630-960-9600, ext. 24

FEBRUARY

- 11th, Saturday WSHS Third Annual "For the Love of Pets" Adoptathon.
See Page 8 for details
- 14th, Tuesday Happy Valentines Day! From the homeless animals at the shelter!
- 28th, Tuesday Spay Day USA. Stop by the shelter or check our web site at www.WSHS-DG.org for your Spay/Neuter Discount Coupon.

MARCH

- 15th, Wednesday WSHS General Meeting held at 7:30 pm at the Downers Grove Park District
- 19th, Sunday Second Annual Alley Cats Bowlathon. See page 8 for more information on this exciting event!
- 26th, Sunday Chicago Rush Arena Football West Suburban Humane Society Day!
See page 5 for more information.

APRIL

- 16th, Sunday Easter - WSHS will be closed today.

WSHS Wish List

Always Needed:

- Paper Towels
- Canned kitten & cat food
- Canned dog food
- Cat litter (no scoopable)
- Stamps (to be used for postage)
- Garbage bags
(13 gallon & 30 gallon sizes)
- 6" paper plates
- Bleach
- Laundry Detergent
- Volunteers!
- Monetary donations are
always appreciated!

West Suburban Humane Society

shelter services include:

- Pet Adoptions
- Free Pet I.D. Tags
- Community Education
- Humane Investigations
- Pet Behavior Counseling
- Spay/Neuter Referrals
- Lost & Found Hotline

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WEST SUBURBAN HUMANE SOCIETY

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Linda Roth (Ext. 23)
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ADOPTION CENTER:

1901 W. Ogden Avenue,
Downers Grove, IL 60515
E-Mail Address: Director@WSHS-DG.org
Phone: 630-960-9600
Fax: 630-960-9604



