

## **WE NEED DESEXING TOO!**



**CASTRATION** is the term used when sterilising a male animal. The surgery itself is performed under a general anesthetic and is usually fairly straight forward. It is a day procedure and in some cases can be performed when your pet is as young as 3 months old.

Although there are some health benefits from sterilising your pet such as testicular cancer prevention, the main benefits achieved from castration in male pets are related to behavioral problems that develop as the animal becomes sexually mature. These behaviors include but are not limited to spraying urine, humping/mounting objects, biting, becoming territorial and general aggression towards people and other animals. If castration is performed while the pet is still young then most of these behaviors will be prevented or stop with time. Leaving this surgery until your pet is older sometimes means that these behaviors become learnt and won't entirely stop after the surgery is performed. Breeding your pet will not ease these behaviors and often encourages the behaviors to worsen.

**SPEY** is the term used when sterilising a female animal. The surgery is done under a general anesthetic and is a day procedure for your pet. In some cases can be performed when your pet is as young as 3 - 4 months old.

Like males, females can also develop behavioral concerns as they begin to mature and are sometimes even more aggressive. Females can become extremely territorial and protective of their space due to the increased hormone levels they have. Most of these behaviors can be corrected by having your female pet spayed.

The main concern with female animals and the reason why sterilising them is so important is that they are at an extremely high risk of life threatening conditions if left unsterilised. Up to 80% of unsterilised female rabbits will develop a uterine tumour. Female guinea pigs are prone to ovarian cysts, rats to mammary tumours and ferrets can become fatally anemic while in season. Having your pet spayed will prevent all of these health concerns. Breeding your pet will not prevent these health concerns and they will have the same amount of risk.

Please consider having your male and female rabbits, guinea pigs, rats and ferrets sterilised and feel free to discuss with us any questions you may have.

