

When to Spay or Neuter Your Dog.

Before you see it on the Interwebs, you should know that there's a retired human dentist at UC Davis ringing the bell NOT to spay or neuter a pet, just live with the bleeding and humping.

What the dentist is citing is some (high quality) research that shows that spayed female dogs have an 8% increased chance of developing splenic hemiosarcoma. It's true. I read it. But it's FAR from the "whole truth". It wouldn't be exciting, nor sell dog food*, if she supplied the antithesis to that study that shows that NOT spaying a female dog gives a conservative 12% increase in chances of ovarian and mammary cancer. But that's omitted by this dentist.

So, we'll put the human dentist spay-hysteria aside....

1. Good research says that spaying **before** the first heat (< 6 months) has no deleterious side effect. And in some ways, is superior to delaying.
2. Other, equally reviewed research shows that **waiting** til just-**after** the first heat (> 6 months) is superior.

So which is it?

Everyone agrees that spaying WITHIN THE FIRST TWO YEARS has the best anti-cancer impact.

My opinion based on ALL THE JUNK I've read: Spay just AFTER the first heat - or before they hit 49 pounds whichever comes first.

When to neuter: (Orchidectomy male dogs)

- Small dogs: Doesn't matter.
- Block headed dogs: After 1-2 years as long as temper holds.
- Dogs (any size or age) that growl, run, and don't listen: Neuter Immediately

MANY owners want to wait for the dog's block head to form up. But the dog starts being a total JERK before it can. Well, too bad about the head and shoulders, NEUTER HIM. Or, have this blocky-headed, amazing looking dog that's a total ass. My dog Ajax turned into a "non-listening, bird-killin', stranger-growling JERK." And got neutered at 5 months. My former dog Bailey, made it out to 2 years old without ANY growling, male-stink, leg-humping, not-listening, runnin'-away, car-chasing ass-hattery..

*In modern Vet Medicine, a key to marketing success is to say something you can verify, that sounds outlandish. Even if you have to omit the exceptions, or if your statement requires fine-print qualification to be true: Just say something that shifts a paradigm. You get picked up by sensational journals and a thousand pet publications and you make sure your 'byline' says "America's Favorite Vet" or "America's Most Trusted Vet." Which is also specious. But heck, you're in the headlines with a 'breakthrough' assertion. You're *assumed* to be 'in the know'. "Dr. Marty" for example sells the HECK out of a truly mediocre, mass-produced dog food by positioning himself in the headlines with this or that crazy comment.