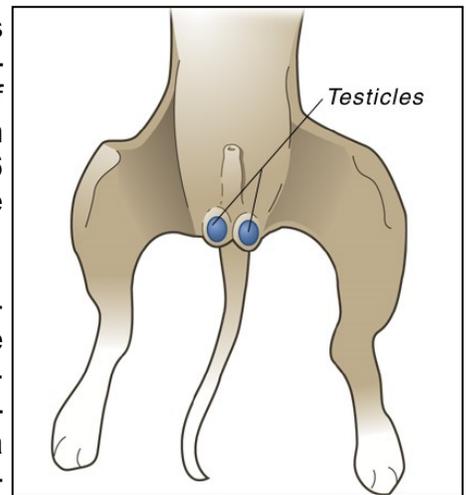


### ***What age is best for preventive castration?***

A number of studies have shown that castration is just as effective at reducing male associated behavior problems as it is at preventing them. This means that whether the pet is castrated post-pubertally (e.g. 1 year or older) or pre-pubertally (e.g. before 6 to 9 months of age) the behavioral effects are likely to be the same. There is, however, anecdotal evidence that dogs that are sexually experienced are more likely to retain their sexual habits after castration, compared to those dogs that have had little or no sexual experience prior to castration.

It has been advocated recently that castration be performed at as young an age as is practical, to ensure that it is done before the pet has a chance to breed. This is most important in animal shelters, since it allows them to ensure that every dog adopted has already been castrated. Many shelters now routinely begin neutering as young as two months of age. To date, studies have shown that castration at this early age is safe, and has no long-term effects on health or behavior, regardless of the age that it is performed. It has been suggested that surgery at this age is shorter, that recovery is quicker, that there is with less post-operative discomfort for these younger animals. However, if castration is performed before all permanent (adult) teeth have erupted, your dog should be rechecked around 6 months of age to insure that no deciduous (baby) teeth have been retained.



Once dogs are adopted into their new homes, most veterinarians recommend waiting until all vaccinations are complete before admitting the pet into the hospital for surgery. However, if general anesthesia were needed prior to the vaccinations being completed for any other reason (e.g. suturing a cut, removing quills) this would be an excellent time to consider castration. In summary, there seems to be no behavioral or medical benefit to waiting until a dog is "mature" to perform a castration.

### ***My dog has retained testicles - what does this mean?***

During fetal development or shortly after birth, the testicles will descend into the scrotal sac. In some dogs, likely due to a genetic predisposition, the testicles may not descend into the scrotal sac. These dogs are known as either unilateral (one testicle) or bilateral (both testicles) cryptorchids. The testicle may be retained in the abdomen or anywhere between the abdominal cavity and the external sac. Retained testicles do not usually produce sperm, but they will produce hormones, which can lead to any of the behavioral changes or medical problems previously discussed. In fact, some studies have shown that retained testicles may be more prone to developing cancer. At the very least, it would be extremely difficult to determine if a testicle, which is located in the abdomen, begins to develop cancer, since it cannot be palpated. All dogs with retained testicles should be neutered (and both testicles

removed) for medical and behavioral reasons, and to ensure that this genetic abnormality is not perpetuated.

**What happens when I leave my dog for this procedure?**

Your pet will be scheduled for pre-surgical blood test's to determine the pets health for anesthesia. The day of your surgery, your pet will receive a full physical, an ECG to make final preparation's to anesthesia and the surgery itself. Most pets will have an intravenous catheter placed to administer the pre-surgical pain medication along with the anesthetic and to provide fluid therapy during the surgery. After your pet is anesthetized, a breathing tube will be placed in her trachea or windpipe. This will allow the delivery of oxygen and the gas anesthetic directly into the lungs. The surgery consists of making a small incision just below the umbilicus and removing the ovaries and uterus. Many veterinarians use absorbable sutures so that you do not have to return to have them removed.

**\*We here are committed to enhance the human-animal bond, and as an empowered healthcare team committed to providing high quality veterinary care.**