WHEN SHOULD MY DOG BE NEUTERED OR SPAYED?

Is your dog a male or female?

How much do you think your dog will weigh when fully grown?

Less than 45 lbs / 20 kg

More than 45 lbs / 20 kg

MALE

Neuter at 6 months of age

Neuter after growth stops (9–15 months of age)

FEMALE

Spay before first heat cycle (5–6 months of age)

Spay between 5–15 months of age

WHY IS THE RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE SO WIDE?

Different breeds stop growing at different ages.

In addition to differences in the age of maturity among breeds, there are competing risks depending on your female dog’s breed and lifestyle.

WHAT ARE THE COMPETING RISKS?

Spay before first heat cycle (5–6 months of age)

- ↑ risk of breast cancer
- Prevents unwanted litters

Spay after growth stops, but likely after first heat cycle (5–15 months of age)

- ↑ risk of breast cancer
- ↓ risk of certain other cancers and bone, ligament and joint problems
- May ↓ risk of urinary incontinence

Talk to your veterinary team about how this evolving information can be applied to your dog as an individual.

These recommendations are based on the 2019 AAHA Canine Life Stage Guidelines.
For more information, visit aaha.org/caninelifestage.