

#PETS

Everything you must know before neutering your pet

Are you tired of your pet escaping your house, littering in unwanted places or showing aggressive behaviours or fighting with other pets? In that case, neutering might be the solution to all of your pet-problems.

In simple terms, neutering is the surgical procedure of sterilising a pet to prevent reproduction.

Neutering in male animals is called castration, while for females, it's called spaying. The latter is a bit risky and complicated, as it is concerned with removal of internal organs such as the uterus.

Importance of neutering

Whether or not to neuter your pet is totally up to you, but here are a couple of things you should know before making such a crucial decision.

Dr Md Tanvir Ul Alam, who is a Veterinary Officer at Animedcare, mentions, "If a cat or dog is suffering from cardiac problems and respiratory problems like asthma or pneumonia, anaesthesia becomes really risky. Neutering should not be done in such conditions."

By removing reproductive organs, uterus in females and testicles in males, neutering prevents your pet suffering from uterus or testicular cancer, alongside giving protection from bacterial infections.

Treatment duration

It might seem an intimidating process to you but in reality, vets handle it perfectly. The surgery would be done in 30 to 90 minutes and your pet is good to go!

Anaesthesia is given during the surgery, so no need to worry for any pain during the process. To prevent vomiting during anaesthesia, avoid feeding your cat or dog 10-12 hours before surgery, and stop giving water 6 hours beforehand.

When inquired about the ideal timing for neutering, he replies, "Normally, it should be done at five to six months of age. For females, it's best if done before the first heat (reproductive cycle)."

Conditions for neutering

The surgery should never be done at home, since a perfectly sterilised environment cannot be ensured. You certainly don't want your furry little friend to suffer from post-surgery infections.

Before choosing the perfect veterinary clinic for your pet, always check that the operation theatre is properly equipped with sterilised needles, emergency medication, oxygen, and blood supply.

"100 per cent aseptic conditions must be maintained in the operation theatre to avoid infections in the animal," emphasises Dr Tanvir.



Post-treatment take care

Once the surgery is completed, the vet's duty is almost done. Now comes your part to become a responsible pet parent.

Dr Tanvir mentions, "We usually prescribe a medicine for five to seven days after neutering."

You can choose either the injectable



or oral form of medicine, whichever suits your pet, so there's no need to stress over feeding it to your pet.

Allow your pawed companion to relax as much as possible and limit their movement for at least a week after the procedure, particularly for cats, which are habitually more active.

"In the two weeks following surgery, take extra care to keep the site of incision (area where the cut has been made) dry at all times, even after littering," advises Dr Tanvir

You might find your cats and dogs trying to lick the incision area. If you don't stop them from doing so, it would make the area wet with saliva. Pet wears like collars, muzzles, or surgical socks come in handy.

Strict parenting sometimes applies to pets too. According to him, "For one week following neutering, do not take them to play dates or let them mix with other cats and dogs."

Changes in lifestyle habits

"Pets usually recover within five to seven days. At most, the follow-up visits to the vet can last up to two weeks," states Dr Tanvir.

Once your cat or dog has fully recovered, and its ready to resume its normal life, you should pay more attention to its daily routines.

During summer, shower your neutered cat once or twice a month, and if you have a dog, give it a shower once a week. Avoid showering your pet in winter unless it is a big dog.

If you have a large dog, take it out for a walk twice daily. But do make sure the place is free of any ticks and fleas.

Dr Tanvir advises not to bring neutered cats out of the house. But if it is necessary, you can carry your cat in your lap with a belt, preferably.

Worried about which diet to specifically follow for your neutered pet? We got you. Dr Tanvir highlights, "The best diet would be the one rich in fibre, with proteins like boiled chicken alongside boiled vegetables like pumpkin, broccoli."

In case you are buying ready-made packaged food, pick one with the best quality.

The environment of your house matters as well. Avoid excessive lighting and keep every corner free of dust to ensure the perfect atmosphere for your little friend to reside in after neutering.

For any pet owner, what seems to come before their own life is their pet's life. They care for their furry little companions more than they care for themselves sometimes. Now that you know all the important guidelines for neutering, we trust you to take the best care of your fur-friend!

By Labiba Tasnim

Photo: Collected

Simple ways to replace your most harmful habits

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

Some behavioural specialists recommend using "stop-smoking" mobile phone apps that track triggers and offer timed breathing exercises to manage urges in real time.

In addition, people can also keep flavoured chewing gums with them whenever the cravings of a cigarette begin to kick in. This can also help to distract one from puffing a cigarette or vape.

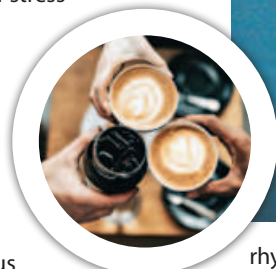
Doomscrolling has become another common modern habit. Constantly consuming negative news and social media updates does not only increase stress and disturb sleep patterns, but also leads to a more pessimistic mindset. Therefore, in order to combat this, one can rather move to using e-book apps, choosing some light-hearted books or articles or even read stances penned by motivational speakers.

Excessive caffeine and sugary soda intake are another overlooked issue. While a cup of tea or coffee can improve alertness, repeated high doses may raise heart rate, disturb sleep, and increase irritability. Nutrition experts suggest gradually replacing one daily sugary drink with sparkling water or infused water to reduce sugar without feeling deprived. Many brands are producing different flavours to mix with water and drink on a regular basis.

Nail-biting may seem minor, but it does damage the skin while spreading bacteria and weakening nail beds. Instead of relying on willpower alone, dermatologists often suggest applying bitter-tasting nail coatings, or keeping nails neatly trimmed to reduce temptations. Some people benefit from using fidget tools or stress balls to redirect nervous energy.

Another growing concern seen among young adults is the habit of checking phones constantly, even if there are no notifications. This behaviour interrupts focus and deep-thinking time. Simple steps such as turning off non-essential notifications, moving distracting apps off the home screen, or setting the fixed "phone-free" hours can significantly help lower usage. Also turning Wi-Fi off when the phone is not in use is also helpful.

Late-night sleeping and irregular routines also affect long term health. Poor sleep has been linked to weakened immunity and reduced mental clarity. Experts recommend setting a consistent sleep schedule and avoiding screens at least 30 minutes before bed to reset the body's



rhythm. Also, taking early supper is a key factor to get a good night's sleep.

Procrastination is a quieter but equally harmful habit. Delaying tasks increases stress and reduces self-confidence over time. Procrastination also leads to pessimistic and cranky attitude among young adults. Behavioural research suggests breaking tasks into very small steps, even five-minute actions, to overcome the mental block that causes delay.

What connects all these habits is not weakness, but repetition due to lack of determination. Habits form when the

brain links a cue to a routine and a reward. Replacing the routine, rather than fighting the urge directly, is often more effective. There is an old saying — "Old habits die hard" — so, we need to be consistent as only then can a vivid change be more obvious.

For example, if boredom leads to scrolling, keeping a book within reach offers an easy substitute. If stress triggers smoking, stepping outside for a short walk or practicing guided breathing through an app can create a similar calming effect. Small changes repeated daily slowly rewire behaviour.

Most importantly, habit change works best when the environment supports it. Keeping unhealthy snacks out of sight, charging phones away from the bed, or placing reminders on desks can gently influence behaviour without constant effort. These subtle adjustments reduce reliance on willpower.

Everyday bad habits do not disappear overnight, and perfection is not the goal. Progress comes from steady, practical adjustments, rather than extreme rules. Over time, healthier routines become just as automatic as the old ones.

By Sana Nawab

Photo: Collected