



"LAME EXCUSES FOR NOT FIXING YOUR PET"

Information provided by: Dr. Miki King
Originally titled "Why I Won't Neuter My Pet"

1.) "I have a purebred, AKC registered dog and should continue the line."

But what do those papers really tell you? Nothing important. Nothing imperative to keep that gene line going. So your dog's father was "Dakota Sunrise"... but do you know if Dakota had heart problems, hip dysplasia, or seizures? Did his mother, "Ark's Kelly Lane" have congenital cataracts, Von Willebrand's disease, or glaucoma? These can all be inherited problems that can be passed onto your "purebred" problem litters. Do you really want to risk it? Just because your dog has good family history doesn't mean he has good medical history.

2.) "My pet will get fat and lazy if he gets fixed."

Simply not true. Factors that YOU control are what will keep your pet from being fat or lazy. Fat is caused by too many calories and too little exercise. Fat is palatable, and many pet foods put too much fat in the ingredients just to make sure that animals will want to eat it. Take a few minutes to read the label on your pet's food and select a food that contains more protein (chicken, beef, lamb, salmon, and whitefish) and less carbohydrates (rice, potatoes, and corn) and no fillers (wheat and soy). If you simply spend some time walking your dog or playing with your cat, you can keep him or her in good shape so they won't get fat. Buy a leash, some catnip, or toys -- they burn calories and are lots of fun!

3.) "I want my pet to have a baby so I'll have another one just like her!"

Are you an identical representation of your father or mother? Probably not. You may have similar genetic traits, but you have an entirely different personality. Most planned pet breeding produce fraternal twins, the kind that are born at the same time but don't look or act alike. Even Dolly, the cloned sheep, will act differently from her clone due to her environment.

4.) "My kitty is such a sweet cat -- I don't want his personality to change."

This statement implies that his personality is driven by his hormones, which is not the case. Urine spraying, fighting, roaming, and humping are the only sexually driven behaviors in cats. You really WANT your cat to keep doing those things? If you think your pet's personality will change after being fixed, you're wrong. It will keep him youthful and playful for a lifetime, instead of changing into a nasty sexual animal. The only manner your pet will change is in a good way: neutering and spaying may diminish your pet's tendency to fight with other animals over territory, and they will not have a strong desire to wander off to find a partner. He will be the same cat you adore so much. The affection your cat has for you is pure love, not hormonally driven -- he will love you the same even after he's fixed!

5.) "I have the idea we could sell the litter and make a lot of money!"

Even if you DID manage to sell all of the babies, how much profit would you really be making when you take into consideration how much you would be SPENDING? First off, you'd have to pay for a stud to breed with. (If your dog or cat was already pregnant and you didn't know who the father was, you can't

morally sell them as purebred anyway!) And then figure in the cost to keep the mother healthy through pregnancy and during birth. What if things don't go well, and you need to rush her in for an emergency visit in the middle of the night? What if she needed a c-section, could you afford it the \$400 for the surgery alone? Or would you have to just let her suffer? What if she gets eclampsia? That could be life threatening! Also think of the costs to keep the babies in good health, and anything that might come up medically. Are you planning to have the tails and dewclaws done? Because that tacks on even more money. And figure in the money to take care of the babies until they find homes. Feeding them, getting shots, litter, blankets, special food, maybe toys (if you are a GOOD owner). Plus you need to give every one of those babies their essential vaccines they get as babies, and worming! Plus add in the costs of cleaning products, replacement blankets for the messed up ones, and lots of trash bags -- those babies don't understand the meaning of housebroken, and they won't for awhile! Can you handle the smell and the multiple cleanings every day? Don't forget how those little mouths will be hungry once they are weaned and will need lots of special puppy or kitten food. Plus you will have to feed the mother special food, and lots of it! And then think of the cost to FIND homes, by placing ads in a newspapers, or costs from the photocopy place to print up fliers. Think about ALL the things you'd have to pay for. Even after you sell the litter, you'd be lucky to break even!

6.) "My kids should see the miracle of birth."

Yeah, right. What for? What would that teach them that they can't learn from educational TV, books, and the internet? We have some excellent videos that are ideal for children and are probably more informative than just watching it happen to the family pet. Besides, the presence of people when an animal is preparing to give birth is extremely stressful to the pet, so much so that she may not care for the newborns or even injure them, or nearby people (like your children), as she lashes out. Surely you don't want to endanger your child OR your pet.

Why would you want to expose your children to the reality of baby animals just being given away because you can't provide for the litter? What if your kids worry that you will get rid of them if you can't provide for your family? Having a litter and getting rid of it will only teach your child that life is not precious. If you REALLY want to throw the ways of the world at your kid -- just take them to an animal shelter and show them all the dogs and cats, and explain that they will die because there aren't enough homes for them all. Your kids will learn.

7.) "I am worried about the anesthesia (and/or) about the surgery."

Talk to your veterinarian. The anesthetics used these days are quite safe. Preoperative blood work can easily be performed to assess how your pet will react to anesthesia. Don't worry -- neutering and spaying are the most COMMON surgeries performed at animal hospitals. Although every pet is special and brings something different to the table, the pets do well and seem to be their old selves again within a day or two. (Actually, sometimes they feel TOO happy!)

8.) "I heard she will be a better pet if she's allowed to have a litter."

What? Where did you hear THAT? First-time moms are usually too nervous and don't know what they are doing; even if they DO manage to nurse, they are not the best parent to their first litter. She will be very agitated around children, strangers, and other pets. And contrary to popular myth, down the road she will NOT look upon your family as "her litter" just because she has had babies of her own. Having a

litter will not "calm her down" either -- only age and training can do that. Take it from a vet!

9.) "My father / boyfriend / husband won't let us get the pet fixed."

Now come on, guys. Grow up a little. Neutering has nothing to do with a man's anatomy. Only the pet's testicles are worked on, not the "whole package". The animal suffers ZERO psychological damage, and won't really even notice. Keeping your pet from getting fixed for a stupid reason like that is SO selfish. Don't you want your pet to be around a long time? They will leave YEARS longer if you get them fixed. Males have decreased incidence of prostatic disease, testicular tumors, perianal tumors, and hernias! Female benefit too, with less chance of uterine infections, ovarian tumors, and mammary tumors -- which, by the way, are often malignant in dogs... but rarely happen if your dog is fixed

10.) Its too expensive.

An understandable reason, but a bad excuse. Morgan County Humane Society's H.O.P.E. Program (Help Over-Population End) assists you in getting your pet spayed or neutered. Qualified Morgan County residents can get this procedure done for any size dog or cat for only \$14.00. I mean, how much does it cost to get a large pizza delivered, around \$20? Or two tickets to the movie theater? For the cost of one evening for yourself, you could get your pet fixed, saving their life, and the lives of so many homeless animals everywhere. When you look at the shelter populations of unwanted pets, you must know that is too expensive NOT to spay or neuter your pet!!!

Morgan County Humane Society is serious about reducing future unwanted litters of puppies and kittens. Please call us today at 765.349.9177 to schedule your appointment.