

## **Neutering factsheet: Male cat**

### ***Why I should neuter my male cat?***

The decision whether or not to have your male cat neutered (or “castrated”) can be daunting and there seems to be a lot of contradictory information available on the subject. Here at the Beaumont Sainsbury Animal Hospital (BSAH) we recommend that male cats are neutered from 4 months of age on health grounds and this recommendation is based on scientific evidence.

### ***What does having my cat neutered entail?***

The procedure involves removing your pet’s testicles under a general anaesthetic, which usually just requires your pet to be with us as a day patient. Castration will prevent your cat from being able to mate with a female cat which results in pregnancy and it also curtails undesirable behaviour.

### ***What are the health benefits of neutering my cat?***

- ✓ If they are allowed outside, entire male cats are driven to roam widely in search of females to mate with. Studies have shown that stray cats suffer more significant injuries in road traffic accidents and that stray cats are more likely to be unneutered males. In addition unneutered male cats are much more likely to fight with other cats, resulting in increased veterinary costs associated with cat bite abscesses and a higher risk of contracting diseases such as Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) and Feline Leukaemia Virus (FeLV).
- ✓ Entire male cats kept as indoor cats are likely to get extremely frustrated as they are unable to meet their natural drive to find mates. As a result they are prone to spraying in the house and often excrete a pungent odour which people can find very offensive; they are also more likely to develop behavioural problems.
- ✓ Neutering eliminates the risk of your pet developing testicular cancer. This is particularly important if your cat is found to have a cryptorchid (undescended) testicle.

### ***Are there any downsides to castrating my cat?***

It is recognised that neutered cats are more likely to become overweight, particularly in some breeds. However, it is a myth that once the weight is put on that it is much more difficult to lose than if the dog was entire and we recommend monitoring your pets’ weight after he has been neutered and be prepared to reduce his food intake if necessary.

The procedure requires that your pet undergoes a general anaesthetic, which has inherent risks. At the BSAH we give all patients a thorough pre-anaesthetic examination to minimise risk of general anaesthetic.

If any of the above issues concern you, or you have heard anything elsewhere regarding neutering that you are worried may affect your pet, then please do not hesitate to book an appointment with one of our veterinary surgeons to discuss your concerns.

***On the basis of current evidence, our veterinary team at the BSAH recommend male cats are neutered from 4 months of age to receive the maximum health benefits.***