
**AVIAN & EXOTIC CLINIC
of the Monterey Peninsula**

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Why Spay and Neuter Rabbits?

- **Altered rabbits live longer and healthier lives than unaltered rabbits.**
Female rabbits over 4 years of age have a 50%-80% chance of developing uterine cancer. This risk is eliminated by spaying your rabbit. Spaying your rabbit will also eliminate the risk of ovarian cancer, and reduce the risk of breast cancer.
Neutering your male rabbit will eliminate the risk of testicular cancer. He also will be less likely to fight with other animals, which can result in injury or death.
- **Altered rabbits make better companions.**
Altered rabbits are calmer and more loving than unaltered rabbits. They are also less prone to destructive and aggressive behaviors such as chewing, digging, biting, and growling.
- **Altered rabbits are less likely to urinate outside of the litter box.**
Rabbits that have not been spayed or neutered are much more likely to urinate outside of the litter box. Intact rabbits urinate on objects and walls as a means of marking their territory. Spaying or neutering your rabbit greatly improves litter box habits.
- **Altered rabbits don't contribute to the overpopulation problem.**
Animal shelters are overflowing with unwanted rabbits. Over 7 million dogs, cats, and rabbits are euthanized in animal shelters every year. In addition, some owners abandon their pet rabbits in fields and parks, where they are condemned to starvation, sickness, injury, and predation.
- **Altered rabbits can safely have a friend to play with.**
Rabbits are social animals and enjoy the company of other rabbits. But unless your rabbit is altered, he or she may display sufficient sexual aggression that they cannot be safely housed with other rabbits. Spaying and neutering will improve your rabbit's social life.
- **Spaying and neutering is a safe procedure *when performed by an experienced rabbit veterinarian.***
Spaying is the surgical removal of the ovaries and uterus, and neutering is the surgical removal of the testicles. A knowledgeable veterinarian can spay or neuter a healthy rabbit with very little risk to the patient. We recommend spaying female rabbits at around 6 months of age, and neutering male rabbits at around 3 1/2 to 5 months of age.
If your rabbit is over 2 years of age, spaying and neutering is still a good idea. Your veterinarian will want to make sure your pet is healthy prior to scheduling surgery.