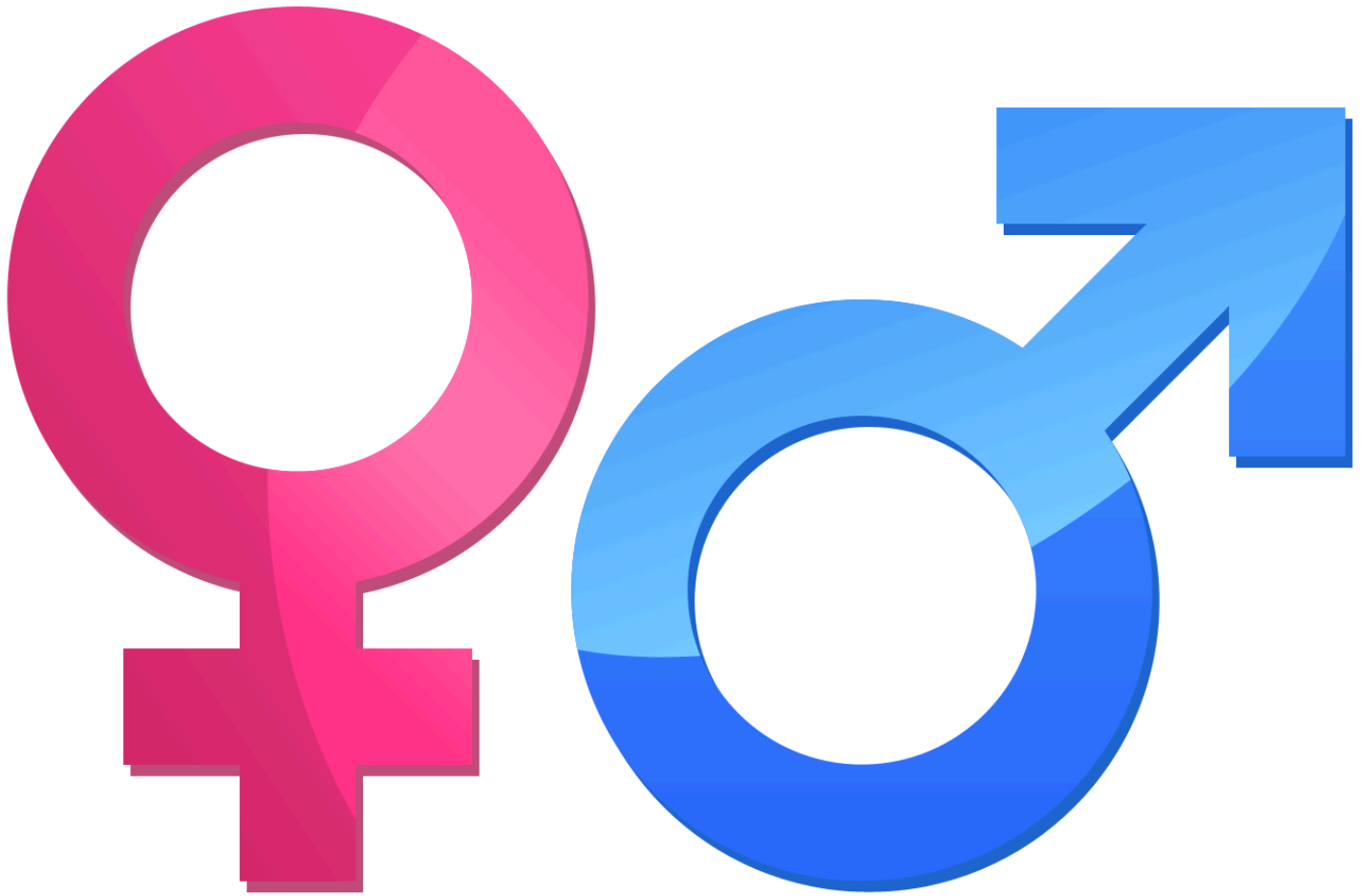




PROS AND CONS OF SPAYING AND NEUTERING

What are the benefits of spaying and neutering? While it sounds astronomical, a pair of cats could produce 420,000 offspring in the course of seven years if they and their offspring were not spayed or neutered (animalrescueprofessionals.org). While keeping the population in check is highly important, there are other benefits to your cat's health and wellbeing from sterilization.

Myth: Cats should have at least one heat cycle before being spayed. Veterinarians no longer recommend waiting until after the first heat cycle to spay female cats. Cats can go into heat as early as 4-6 months. Most veterinarians now recommend spaying before the first heat cycle, but why?

There are some important health benefits to spaying before your cat goes into the first heat cycle.

Reduced Risk of Cancer: spaying before the first heat cycle reduces and may even eliminate the risk of mammary gland tumors, ovarian or uterine cancer, as certain hormones are not activated in the body.

Behavioral Perks: excessive yowling, and restlessness associated with attracting a mate is also eliminated by early spaying.

Myth: Cats should have at least one litter before being spayed. Having a litter of kittens before being spayed is not recommended by veterinarians. There is no reason for a cat to have kittens before being spayed.

Once a cat becomes sexually mature, normally around 6-7 months, they will have a heat cycle every two to three weeks unless they become pregnant. They can experience unnecessary stress during their heat cycle as hormones become active. They may become restless and very vocal as their hormones are telling them to find a mate, Early spay/neuter eliminates this stress. Bad habits such as urinating outside the litter box can also begin when cats are not spayed before their first heat cycle, and they feel unnecessary stress.

If your cat is currently in heat, it is normally best to wait a couple weeks after the heat cycle, when the blood vessels are no longer enlarged and there is a lower risk of excessive bleeding for the procedure. Some cats may go back into heat a few days or a couple weeks after the heat cycle, so you may have to work closely with your veterinarian on timing. Spaying before heat begins is another way to eliminate this issue.

Hormones, how do they affect male and female cats? Hormones are secreted through the endocrine system. In cats, this consists of the hypothalamus, pituitary gland, parathyroid gland, adrenal gland, pancreas, kidneys and testes or ovaries. This is a very complex network, but basically the glands secrete hormones which go into the bloodstream and are used by other parts of the body. Hormones help to regulate a cat's bodily functions. When dealing with the reproductive system the most prevalent hormones are testosterone, progesterone and estrogen. Testosterone is responsible for the male's sexual behavior and secondary sexual characteristics. Estrogen and progesterone are the hormones involved in the female cats' reproductive system. Estrogen and progesterone regulate heat cycles in female cats.

Do hormones affect behavior? Yes, estrogen and progesterone are the hormones that tell a female cat to show physical signs of heat. Spraying urine, restlessness, rubbing around and/or rolling and yowling are contributed to these hormonal changes. When testosterone kicks in, male cats will begin spraying urine too. This behavior does not always go away once they are neutered, so early sterilization can help curtail this unwanted trait. Males may also show aggression if they are not neutered before hormonal behaviors kick in. Other benefits to male cats include having a lower risk of cat fight wounds and less cat bite abscesses. Neutered males have a lower risk of contracting diseases like FIV too.

[Savvy Cats](#) requires all kittens to be spayed or neutered before 10 months of age. We want our kittens to have optimal health both physically and mentally. Reducing the risk of

unnecessary stress and reducing health risks are essential for your cats' wellbeing.

We use a company called SpaySecure to protect your kitten's health and hormones and let them grow to a healthy age before spay/neuter. SpaySecure uses binding contracts to ensure cat sterilization at a healthy age. They'll follow up with you to provide advice and reminders, ensuring your kitten gets spayed or neutered safely. Please visit their website [here](#) for more information.