
AVIAN & EXOTIC CLINIC
Of the Monterey Peninsula

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Why Spay and Neuter Rabbits?

- **Altered rabbits are healthier and live longer than unaltered rabbits.** The risk of reproductive cancers (ovarian, uterine, mammarian) for an unaltered female rabbit is virtually eliminated by spaying your female rabbit. Certain breeds older than 4 years of age have a 50%-80% chance of developing uterine cancer. Your neutered male rabbit will live longer as well, given that he won't be tempted to fight with other animals (rabbits, cats, etc.) due to his sexual aggression.
- **Altered rabbits make better companions.** They are calmer, more loving, and dependable once the undeniable urge to mate has been removed. In addition, rabbits are less prone to destructive (chewing, digging) and aggressive (biting, lunging, circling, growling) behavior after surgery.
- **Avoidance of obnoxious behavior.** Although most rabbits will use a litter box, hormones may cause unneutered males and unspayed females to "mark territory". Spaying or neutering your rabbit improves litter box habits, lessens chewing behavior, decreases territorial aggression and gives your rabbit a happier, longer life.
- **Altered rabbits won't contribute to the problem of overpopulation of rabbits.** Over 7 million adorable dogs, cats, and rabbits are killed in animal shelters in this country every year. In addition, unwanted rabbits are often abandoned in fields, parks, or on city streets to fend for themselves, where they suffer from starvation, sickness, and are easy prey to other animals or traffic accidents.
- **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 cannot have a friend, either of the opposite sex, or the same sex, due to sexual and aggressive behaviors triggered by hormones.
- **Spaying and neutering for rabbits has become a safe procedure *when performed by experienced rabbit veterinarians.*** A knowledgeable veterinarian can spay or neuter your rabbit with very little risk to a healthy rabbit.

At what age should rabbits be spayed or neutered?

Females can be spayed as soon as they are sexually mature, usually around 4 – 6 months of age. Males can be neutered as soon as the testicles descend, usually around 3 1/2 – 5 months of age.

Spaying and neutering of older rabbits:

It is always a good idea, in a rabbit over 2 years of age, to have a very thorough health check done, including full blood work prior to surgery. This may be more expensive, but it will help detect any condition that could make the surgery more risky.

