

## Early-Age Neuter and Spay

**Altering an animal before it reaches puberty is one of the best ways to avoid unwanted litters.**

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Waiting for a cat to grow up before it is spayed or neutered often results in "oops litters," says W. Marvin Mackie, DVM, who heads four Animal Birth Control clinics in Southern California. "In view of the massive numbers of pets destroyed each year, I consider all of us in the veterinary profession to be part of a great failure to relieve pain and suffering by not advocating spaying before the female's first heat."

Altering healthy kittens as young as 6 weeks old can be performed faster than traditional surgeries on older animals, but is the procedure safe?

"The skill required to perform the surgery is not extraordinary," Mackie says. "The recovery of the youthful patient is extraordinarily quick, however, leaving it unaffected by this important event in its early life. To date, no significant negative concerns have been found in what is now becoming a well-documented subject."

Early spay and neuter is a growing trend endorsed by major humane organizations like the American Humane Association, the Humane Society of the United States, the American Veterinary Medical Association and the Cat Fanciers' Association.

- More Spay and Neuter -