

ARK believes that early neutering is the only really feasible solution to decrease pet overpopulation and the tragedy of the resulting deaths. Also, by ensuring ALL animals, regardless of their age or sex, are neutered BEFORE being rehomed, everyone at ARK can rest assured we are not contributing to tomorrow's pet surplus and the resulting suffering. Up to now rehoming a puppy or kitten has been a sort of gamble. Our procedure is strict; the new owner must sign a pledge to neuter the animal by the time it is six months old, we follow up by telephoning them, asking for a veterinary certificate. But from bitter experience

25 years in North America alone. Altering pets between 5 and 7 months of age was established by tradition rather than for any specific medical reasons. Many years ago, when safe anesthetic techniques were not available, waiting until a patient was older increased the safety of surgery. But this reason is now outdated as anesthetics and technology have moved on.

Studies on early neutering, in kittens, done by the University of Florida in conjunction with the American Veterinary Medical Association, were monitored closely and concluded that the

neutered. All are well and the remarkably quick recovery from surgery and the way within a few hours after surgery they are eager to eat, play and just be young mischievous animals should be testimony enough to the safety of this procedure.

(Note: Although the procedure is widely approved and shown to be safe in numerous countries, its success rests on the skill of the veterinary surgeon).

References:

Early neutering - University of Florida, funded by The Winn Foundation. Advantages of Early Neutering - Lieberman LL. Journal of American Veterinary Medical Assoc.

Aronsohn MG, Faggella AM. Surgical and anesthetic techniques for neutering 6-14 week old kittens - Journal of American Veterinary Medical Assoc.

Terre Haute Humane Society, Humane Society Of Santa Clara Valley

Early Neutering (Between the ages of 2-5 months)

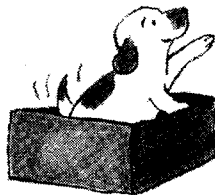
we have found we cannot trust people to keep their promise. Nine out of ten will comply but if one animal escapes the net, we are back to square one, or worse if that ONE has more than one litter.

Remember; ONE unspayed female cat, her mate and all their offspring, producing 2 litters per year, with ONLY 2.8 surviving kittens per litter, (the rest die due to accident and illness before they reach sexual maturity), can total:

In

- 1 year: 12
- 2 years: 67
- 3 years: 376
- 4 years: 2,107
- 5 years: 11,801
- 6 years: 66,088
- 7 years: 370,092
- 8 years: 2,072,514
- 9 years: 11,606,077

(Source: The Pet Savers Foundation USA)



The number could even be higher as the female cat can in practice have three litters per year and usually the survival rate is higher. In order to be 100% sure we need to neuter early.

Few veterinarians in Japan have accumulated a significant amount of experience in anesthetizing very young animals on a regular basis, since there are not very many situations which call for anesthetizing that young. It must be remembered that an eight-week old animal is not just a smaller version of an eight-month old animal. There are important differences between the two in factors such as respiratory and drug metabolism. Most veterinarians are very comfortable with the anesthetic and surgical protocols they have developed for neutering older puppies/kittens and young adults and are reluctant to change.

Yet, the concept of early neutering is not a new one. This philosophy has been around since the early 1900s and has even been in practice for over

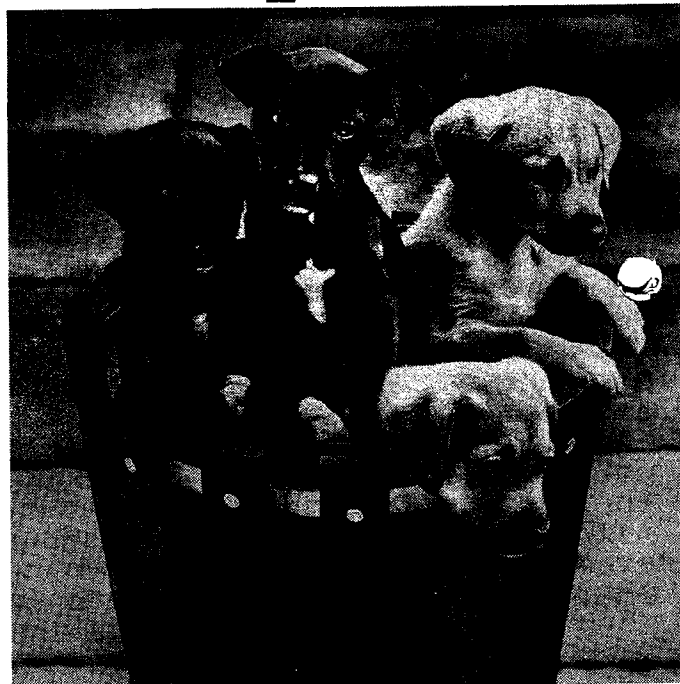
neutering of a kitten, before it has reached sexual maturity, has NO ill side effects and that there were no significant differences in the physical and behavioural differences of cats altered at 7 weeks of age compared to those altered at 7 months. Also, the younger kittens recovered more quickly from surgery.

The safety of neutering and anesthetizing young puppies has also been addressed and the findings published. Again, neutered puppies of 7 weeks and 7 months were compared and it was found that neutering at either age produced similar effects on physical, skeletal and behavioural development. Neutering did NOT affect food intake or weight gain. They also found that early neutering does NOT stunt growth; indeed, it contributes to slight growth enhancement in the 7 week old pups.

Dr. Michael Aronsohn, of the Massachusetts Society for the Protection of Cruelty to Animals, routinely neuters puppies as early as 6 weeks of age. Dr. Aronsohn and his staff have neutered several hundred puppies and kittens with no ill effects. At an animal shelter in Medford, Oregon, over 8000 puppies and kittens neutered at 8-12 weeks have shown no undesirable side effects.

ARK depends on one or two veterinarians willing to neuter early and we have had both male and female kittens and puppies of 2-3 months of age

We all have a serious litter problem.



Neutering saves unwanted suffering

ARK also has other Journal references plus web site addresses regarding early neutering and would be happy to pass this information on to interested bodies or individuals.