

**Kitten & Puppy**

DECREASED ENERGY NEEDS IN PETS AFTER SPAYING OR NEUTERING

Neutering may increase a pet's risk for becoming overweight. The age when a dog or cat is neutered often corresponds with a natural decrease in the pet's growth rate and energy needs. Neutered animals also tend to consume more food and have a reduced basal metabolic rate — meaning they require less energy to keep the body functioning at rest.

**Key Messages**

- It is important to reduce the pet's caloric intake after spaying/neutering because:
 - Overweight or obese dogs are at an increased risk of developing a range of chronic illnesses and a decreased length and quality of life.
 - Overweight cats are more likely to suffer from diabetes mellitus, constipation, orthopedic disease, urinary tract disease and skin disease.
- Caloric intake should be reduced by around 30% to account for lower energy needs after spaying/neutering. Thereafter, adjustments should be made to maintain a lean, healthy body condition.

Additional Resources

Salt, C., Morris, P. J., Wilson, D., Lund, E. M., & German, A. J. (2019). Association between life span and body condition in neutered client-owned dogs. *Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine*, 33, 89–99.

Eirmann, L. A. (2014). The challenge of providing feeding recommendations for puppies after neutering. *Proceedings of the Purina Companion Animal Nutrition Summit: Nutrition for Life, Austin, Texas*, 25–31.

Larsen, J. A. (2017). Risk of obesity in the neutered cat. *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery*, 19(8), 779–783.

The Purina Institute aims to help put nutrition at the forefront of pet health discussions by providing user-friendly, science-based information that helps pets live longer, healthier lives.