

PROS AND CONS OF SPAYING FEMALE DOGS



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OBJECTIVES

The objective of this work is to compare the pros and cons of spaying bitches to approach an answer to the problem posed to help veterinarians to obtain criteria by which they can inform pet owners about benefits and risks that can be observed on their pets linked to this surgical procedure.

LOWER RISK:

- Infections
- Diabetes mellitus (and control)
- Sex hormone alopecia
- Mammary tumours *

BENEFITS ON:

- Behavioural problems
- Avoid unwanted litters
- Avoid pyometra (early sterilization)
- ↑ Lifespan*

* Controversial results

PROS

CONS

HIGHER RISK:

- Acquired urinary incontinence
- Obesity
- Adverse reactions to vaccinations
- Behaviour problems
- Tumours:
 - Osteosarcoma (Rottweiler)
 - Mast cell tumour and Lymphoma (Golden Retrievers and Vizslas)
 - Lower urinary tract tumours
- Orthopedic disorders (Intervertebral disc herniation, hip-dysplasia...)
- Immune disorders

CONCLUSIONS

As a main conclusion of this work, there is not a common best option for all the cases. The key point of this controversial topic is to balance the benefits and risks in each animal. The study's results have limited application since each particular case needs to be studied individually. The decision is based on age at spaying, breed, or specific diseases of each dog, being age at spaying the most significant parameter but not determinant.