

Spay or Neuter Your Potbellied Pig!

As with most every type of pet, potbellied pigs need to be spayed or neutered. Females need to be spayed for three reasons. First, piglets are mighty cute, but they eventually grow up and there are entirely too many adult potbellied pigs without homes. People see adorable piglets and take them home without considering how much that little piglet will weigh eventually, how much work will be required to care for the pig properly, and how long they'll have to take care of the pig (could be 15-20 years).



The second reason for spaying a female is to reduce the chance of aggressive behavior. The third reason is that female pigs who are not spayed are extremely likely to develop uterine tumors at some point in their lives. Often, pigs who have these tumors die from the tumors themselves or during surgery to remove the tumors.

Male pigs also need to be neutered for three reasons. The first two are the same as the first two reasons to spay females: (1) to prevent more homeless and unwanted piggies and (2) to reduce aggressive behavior. Males who are not neutered are much more likely to exhibit aggressive behavior toward other pigs and people. Un-neutered males might also become overly amorous with things like sofas and chairs. Protect your furniture – neuter your pig! The third reason to alter male pigs is that un-neutered males will have a strong musky odor.

One caution: Potbellied pigs are very sensitive to anesthesia, so surgery on them can be tricky. Any surgical procedure, including spaying or neutering, should be done by a veterinarian who is experienced in treating potbellied pigs. If you need help finding a potbellied pig veterinarian in your area, contact the pig department at Best Friends.

So, please spay or neuter your potbellied pigs. Spay/neuter is a win-win situation!

Yvonne McIntosh is the potbellied pig specialist, adoption coordinator and manager for Best Friends Animal Society. If you have questions related to anything piggy, please send an e-mail to yvonnem@bestfriends.org.

