

The 5 Freedoms for Animals

PET CARE

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Spay, Neuter, Sterilisation - what does it mean?

A healthy pet means a healthier family!

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Who is Have a Heart?

Have a Heart offers free spay and neuter services, vaccinations, parasite control and basic medical care for dogs and cats to support low and no income families in municipal townships and informal settlements throughout Namibia by empowering them to take responsible decisions for their pets.

Why is this needed?

Dogs and cats are important for their owners, regardless of their income. Offering free, sustainable and humane dog and cat population management and basic medical care in poor areas increases responsible pet ownership, empowers low and no-income owners to make responsible decisions for their pets, and teaches children to be kind. This is critical for a better future for all of us.

Have a Heart's work is motivated by the health and welfare of dogs, cats, Namibia's wildlife, nature, and humans

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Who is Pako Kids Magazine?

"Pako" is an educational project aimed at helping children in Namibia, also those from underprivileged areas, learn about nature, animals and ecosystems. We provide fun, easy-to-read magazines that spark curiosity and teach kids to care for the environment and all living things.

By reaching children and schools with limited access to learning materials, Pako helps bridge educational gaps while fostering reading skills. Each magazine combines engaging content, games, exciting stories and colourful illustrations, making learning enjoyable and inspiring a love for nature and wildlife.

Through lessons about Namibia's unique environment and ecosystems, Pako encourages children to understand and protect the world around them. The goal is to nurture a generation that values and safeguards nature, creating a brighter future for Namibia and the planet.

"Children can only protect what they truly understand."

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The **5** Freedoms for Animals

Did you know that there are 5 freedoms (welfare needs) for animals?

The 5 freedoms for animals are a list of important rules to make sure animals are happy and healthy. These freedoms help us understand how to treat animals with kindness and respect.

By following these 5 freedoms, we can make sure all animals – whether they are pets, farm animals or wild creatures – live happy and healthy lives!



1. Freedom from Hunger and Thirst

Animals should always have fresh, clean water to drink and enough food to eat. Their food needs to be the right kind for them, so they can grow strong and stay healthy.

2. Freedom from Discomfort

Animals need a comfortable place to live where they feel safe and protected. This means shelter to keep them warm in the cold, cool in the heat and dry when it rains. Their living space should also be clean and cosy.

4. Freedom to Express Normal Behaviour

Every animal has natural behaviours – like running, climbing, digging or playing. They need enough space and the right surroundings to do these things. For example, dogs need space to run, while birds need room to fly or stretch their wings.

3. Freedom from Pain, Injury or Disease

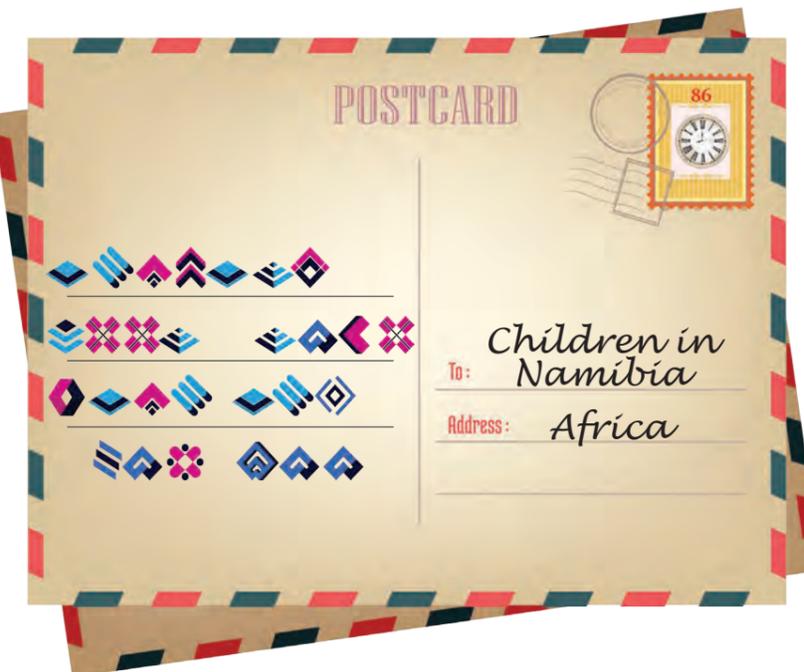
If an animal is hurt or sick, it should get help from a vet or carer right away. Animals deserve proper care to stop them from suffering and to make sure they stay healthy.

5. Freedom from Fear and Distress

Animals should feel safe and not be scared of the people or animals around them. They need gentle treatment and a calm environment, so they do not feel stressed, frightened or lonely.

Postcard from Pako

Pako has sent you a postcard! Each symbol represents a letter. Use the code at the bottom to figure out the message on the card. Can you discover what Pako wants to tell you?



Spay, Neuter, Sterilisation - what does it mean?

Sometimes, pet owners choose to have their cats, dogs, or other animals spayed, neutered, or sterilised. But what do these words mean? Let's break it down in a way that is easy to understand!



Spaying (for girls):

Spaying is a special surgery for female animals that stops them from having babies. A vet (an animal doctor) does this to help keep pets healthy and prevent too many animals without homes.

Sterilisation:

Sterilisation is just another way of saying spaying or neutering. It means stopping animals from having babies, whether they are boys or girls.

Neutering (for boys):

Neutering is like spaying, but it is for male animals. It is a small operation that stops them from making babies.

Why is it important?

It helps control the number of animals in the world so there are fewer strays (animals without homes).

It keeps pets healthier and can stop some illnesses.

It stops male pets from wandering far away or fighting.

Getting your pet spayed or neutered is a way to show love and care. It helps them live a happy, healthy life.



Postcard from Pako

Someone has erased some words from Pako's postcard, making it unreadable. Use the words in the notebook to discover the message.



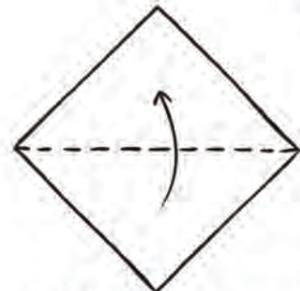
Let us find out how quickly one unspayed cat can multiply in just 10 months!



In this diagram, each litter consists of an average of 2 males and 2 females. The reproduction numbers for dogs after 10 months are similar.

Paper Cats

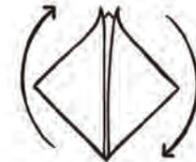
PAPER CATS 🐾



1. fold a square of paper in half



2. fold the bottom corners to the top



3. turn it around



4. fold the bottom flaps up so the tips poke over the top to make ears



6. fold the top and side corners in



7. turn it over



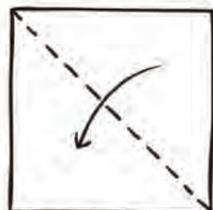
8. turn the front flap up



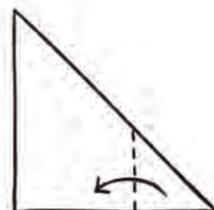
9. turn the corner down to make a nose



10. turn the back flap to the back



11. fold another square of paper in half



12. fold the right corner in



13. slide the body into the head

Cat fact

An unsterilised cat can have 180 kittens in her life time!
Could you keep or find homes for so many cats?

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14. make a few smaller kittens, add some stripes and patches!

See if you can make 180 paper kittens!

The Advantages of Sterilising your Pet!



Healthier community. Diseases like rabies can spread through stray or unvaccinated pets. Sterilisation reduces stray populations, lowering risks of outbreak.

It keeps them healthier. Sterilised pets are less likely to get certain illnesses, like cancers of the reproductive organs. For females, it can prevent infections in their wombs, which can be life-threatening.



Why should you sterilise your pets?

Taking care of your pets means doing what is best for them—and sterilising is a big step in the right direction. **We are also helping to protect wildlife**—fewer pets mean fewer strays, which reduces the risk of spreading diseases to wild animals. Let us keep our furry friends safe, happy and healthy!

Saves money in the long run.

Caring for a pregnant pet, her babies or treating illnesses caused by not being sterilised can be expensive. By sterilising your pet, you avoid those extra costs.

Stops them from wandering off.

Unsterilised animals might run away to find a mate. This can be dangerous because they could get lost, hurt or even hit by a car. Sterilised pets are more likely to stay home and safe.



Helps Control the Pet Population.

Lots of animals do not have homes and end up in shelters. Sterilising pets helps stop too many animals being born, which means fewer end up on the streets or in shelters.

Can prevent behavioural problems. Sterilising pets can make them calmer and less aggressive. Male pets might stop fighting with other animals or marking their territory by spraying smelly wee everywhere!



Word Scramble

Use the letters to spell the word

R M A
L C E

Word Scramble

Use the letters to spell the word

R E F
D I N

PET CARE

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Be responsible. Get your dog sterilised.

Feel under your tongue - the tight skin there is normal. All tongues have one. It is called a frenulum! Just like you, dogs need it so their tongues can work properly.

Puppies need to eat often. 4 meals a day from 2 months old. 3 meals a day from 3 months old. 2 meals a day from 6 months old.

3 week old puppies can try some soft food as well as their mother's milk.

Feed your dog twice a day.

Take your dog for a walk every day.

SSSS SIT! Use rewards to train your dog.

Dogs also need a bath to get clean. Dog Shampoo: 1 spoon dishwashing soap, 1 spoon white vinegar, 2 spoons water. Rub and rinse well.

A mom dog needs lots of water and 3 meals a day so she can make enough milk for her pups.

Puppies need to stay with their mother until they are two months old.

The two fingers rule. Always check that your dog's collar is comfortable.

Your dog needs a comfortable collar and a name tag with your phone number.

Dogs need a warm and dry kennel. Or let them live in your home with you.

Teach your dog to come when you call their name.

Make sure your dog has fresh clean water every day.

Brush your dog's hair often.

Show your dog lots of love and affection.

Wash your pet with the correct dip. You can get it from the Animal Clinic. DANGER! FRESH!

Remember to vaccinate your dog every year. Keep them safe from disease.

Dogs feel the cold too.

Dogs need to play with their friends.

When a strange dog runs up to you, stand very still and be quiet. Try not to look at them.

Medicine from the vet will fix a dog's sore, itchy skin.

On hot days make sure your dog has shade and extra water.

Fireworks scare dogs.

Keep your dog safe. Please! CLOSE THE GATE.

Take your dog to the vet when they are sick or hurt.

Clean up your dog's poo every day.

Play with your dog.

Give your dog a de-worming pill every 6 months. You can get them from the Animal Clinic.

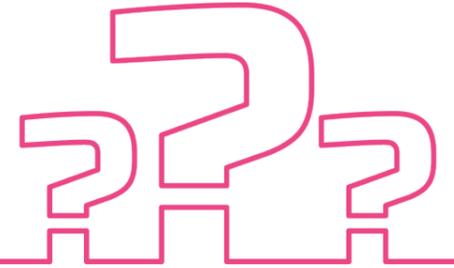
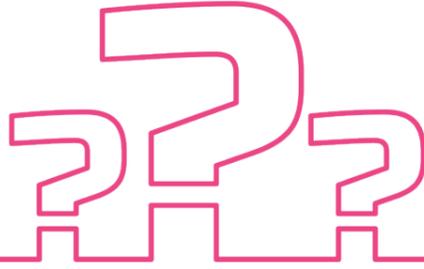
Older dogs are loyal and loving. They need extra love and care.

Spend time with your dog.



Frequently Asked Questions about Spay and Neuter!

FACTS AND MYTHS



Will sterilisation change my pet's personality?



No, sterilisation will not change your pet's personality. It may reduce hormone-driven behaviours like roaming or aggression, but their unique traits will remain.

How long does recovery take?



Most pets recover within 7-10 days. Smaller animals like rabbits or guinea pigs may recover even faster. Follow your vet's post-op care instructions carefully.

Should I sterilise my pet, even if they are not leaving the premises?



Pets can sometimes escape through a door or window, even if it is not something they usually do. If they are not sterilised, they might mate and cause unwanted litters. It can also happen that other animals sneak in.

Why should I neuter my male pet, as he can not have babies?

Even though your male pet can not have babies, he can still make them if he mates with a female pet that is not spayed. This means more puppies or kittens might be born without homes to go to.



Should I let my pet have one litter first?



No, allowing a pet to have a litter doesn't provide any health benefits. Early sterilisation is actually better for their long-term health. A first litter will also not change the personality of your pet.

Does sterilisation cause weight gain?



Sterilised pets may require fewer calories, so keeping them active and feeding them a balanced diet will prevent weight gain.

You promise to find them all loving homes, and maybe you can! But what happens next? Every puppy or kitten in that litter could grow up and have babies of their own. Then those babies could have babies too. Not all of them will find safe homes.

Why should I sterilise my pet? I will find good homes for the babies!



Can small animals like rabbits and guinea pigs also be sterilised?



Yes, small animals like rabbits and guinea pigs can be both spayed (females) and neutered (males). For guinea pigs, neutering males is more common as it is simpler, but females can also be spayed.

Is sterilisation safe for older pets?



Sterilisation can be safe for older pets, but it is important to discuss their health and risks with your vet beforehand.

Postcard from Pako

Another postcard from Pako arrived. The words are all written together, making it difficult to read. Try to decipher the text and find out what Pako wants to tell you.



Activity: Addition Maze



You have noticed your dog is not eating or playing as usual. It is time to take your dog to the vet for a check-up! Solve this addition maze to find the path to the vet.

Start at the entrance, solve the addition problems, and follow the path with the correct answers. If you solve them correctly, you will reach the vet clinic!

4 + 2 6 5 + 8 13 7 + 8 16 4 + 5 8 6 + 4

7 5 12 18 15 17 18 19 13

9 + 2 2 1 + 1 11 9 + 3 13 7 + 9 15 6 + 4

12 3 5 5 12 8 14 16 10

7 + 8 9 4 + 3 7 1 + 7 9 7 + 5 9 4 + 5

17 7 8 9 6 5 12 7 8

6 + 8 12 2 + 8 11 6 + 6 13 7 + 4 10 5 + 2

8 10 6 19 16 8 6 11 17

5 2 + 4 17 8 + 9 14 5 + 9 16 8 + 8



How to Tell if Your Pet is Sick

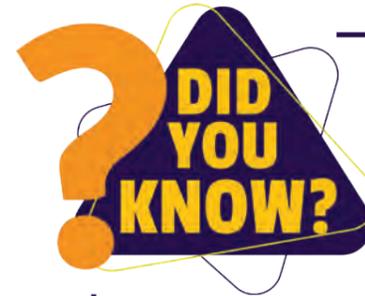
Pets can not tell us when they feel unwell, but they show it in other ways.

Here are some signs to watch for:

- Not Eating or Drinking** – If your pet skips meals or drinks less water than usual, it might be a sign they are unwell.
- Sleeping More** – Pets need rest, but if they are much lazier than usual, they might be sick.
- Acting Differently** – If your pet is hiding, whining or not playing, something could be wrong.
- Strange Bathroom Habits** – Watch for diarrhoea, trouble peeing or not using their litter box.
- Unusual Noises** – Whining, meowing or barking more than usual might mean they are in pain.
- Changes in Appearance** – Look out for hair loss, a dull coat or swelling.

If you notice any of these signs, it is time to take your pet to the vet. Always trust your instincts—if something does not seem right, it is better to get them checked!

Adopting a Pet



Why adopting a pet is a smart choice!

Did you know that adopting a pet from a shelter is not only kind but also super smart? Let me tell you why!

Pets in shelters are ready to go.

When you adopt a pet from a shelter, they are already sterilised (which means they can not have babies). Plus, they are up-to-date with their vaccines to keep them healthy and safe from diseases.

It saves you money.

Getting these treatments at a vet can cost a lot more if you do it on your own. Shelters often include these services for a small adoption fee, which is way cheaper than paying for everything separately.

You are helping animals in need.

By adopting, you are giving a loving home to a pet who really needs it. And when one pet gets adopted, it makes space in the shelter for another animal in need.

So, it is a win-win: you save money, you get a healthy, happy pet and you are doing something amazing for animals!

What do you think? Would you like to visit a shelter and meet your new best friend?



Protect them *so they can protect you.*



- 🐾 For internal and external parasites
- 🐾 2-in-1 tasty chew
- 🐾 Available in 1 month or 3 month treatment

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A Healthy Pet Leads to a Healthier Family and a Stronger Community



Preventing Diseases from Spreading

Pets can sometimes carry germs that make people sick (zoonotic diseases). Here is how to prevent diseases from spreading. Healthy pets play a key role in stopping germs:

Vaccines Are Super Important

Vaccines protect pets from serious illnesses like rabies and distemper.

A vaccinated pet will not catch or spread these dangerous diseases.

Regular Vet Check-ups

Vets can spot and treat health issues before they become a problem for your pet.



How a Healthy Pet Keeps Everyone Safe!

Taking care of your pet is not just good for them—it is also important for your family and your community. Healthy pets help keep everyone safe from diseases and parasites. Let's find out how!



Stopping Parasites in Their Tracks

Parasites are tiny creatures like fleas, ticks and worms that can live on or inside pets. If your pet has parasites, they can spread to people or other animals.

Fleas and Ticks

These can jump from pets to people, causing itchy bites or even illnesses like Lyme disease.

Solution: Use flea and tick prevention treatments regularly.

Worms

Some worms, like roundworms or hookworms, can spread from pets to people.

Solution: Deworm your pet regularly to stop the spread.



Protecting the Whole Community

Healthy pets do not just keep your family safe— they contribute to a healthier community.

No Risk of Rabies

Vaccinated pets prevent the spread of rabies to humans or wild animals.

Happier Interactions

A healthy pet is more likely to be friendly and playful, not scared or aggressive.

How You Can Help Keep Pets Healthy

- Take them to the vet regularly.
- Keep up with vaccines and parasite prevention.
- Feed them good food and make sure they get plenty of exercise.
- Clean up after your pet in the yard and public spaces to stop the spread of germs.

That's why spaying and neutering your pets is so important—it helps prevent them from having litters of puppies or kittens that might be hard to care for. It is much easier to keep two or three pets healthy than to look after their many offspring.

Without sterilising, a single pet could have dozens of babies over its lifetime, and not all of them find good homes. This will lead to more stray animals, which don't get the care they need, spreading diseases (like rabies) and struggling to survive. Stray animals can even spread diseases like rabies to our wildlife (or vice versa).

Lets protect our pets and our wildlife, reducing overpopulation and creating healthier communities for everyone!

Answer Page

PAGE 5

Animals feel love, pain and joy too!

PAGE 7

Spaying and neutering are an important part of pet ownership. They stop unwanted baby animals and help save the lives of many other animals.

PAGE 9

Word Scramble
Use the letters to spell the word

R M A
L C E
C A L M E R

Word Scramble
Use the letters to spell the word

R E F
D I N
F R I E N D

PAGE 20

Have-a-Heart is having a spay day! You have been registered and you can take your pets there to be sterilised. Can you find the way to the event?

PAGE 15

Sterilising is an important way to keep your pets healthy and happy. It keeps them healthier and makes pets calmer and better behaved. It also prevents unwanted puppies or kittens, which helps reduce the number of animals without homes.

PAGE 16

Pets and Wildlife

Sterilising your pets not only prevents unwanted litters but also reduces the number of stray animals. **Fewer stray animals means less competition for food, water and shelter** with wildlife like birds and small mammals. This creates a healthier environment for everyone.



Pets often come into contact with wildlife—whether it's chasing a bird, sniffing around a ground squirrel or even encountering larger animals. If your pet is vaccinations are up to date, they are protected against diseases like rabies, distemper or parvovirus. This means they will not spread harmful diseases to wildlife, keeping ecosystems healthier.

Keeping Pets Healthy and Safe, means Protecting Wildlife!

As we all know, wildlife is super important for keeping our ecosystems healthy! But did you know that by keeping your pets safe and healthy, you are also helping to protect the wildlife around us? **Here's how:**



Keep cats indoors at night. This helps protect both your cats and local wildlife, especially birds. Cats can adapt to staying inside during nighttime with a little time and consistency.

Use a lead for dogs in areas with wildlife. When dogs chase wild animals, such as warthogs, they risk getting injured or even killed. The reverse is also true—wildlife being chased by dogs can be harmed or killed as well.

Helping to reduce the number of stray animals benefits wildlife.



Why This Matters

Wildlife plays a key role in balancing nature, from pollinating plants to keeping pest populations under control. When you care for your pets responsibly, you help ensure the animals in your neighbourhood—wild or domestic—can thrive together.

By keeping your pets healthy, you are doing your part to protect the wonderful wildlife that makes our world so amazing!



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Thank you for giving
nature and animals
a voice!

