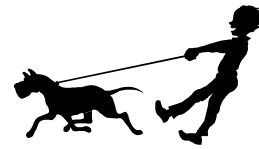


## LESS THAN EXCITING BEHAVIORS ASSOCIATED WITH UNNEUTERED MALE DOGS!



ASPCA NATIONAL SHELTER OUTREACH

DOG CARE

Periodic binges of household destruction, digging and scratching. Indoor restlessness/irritability.

Pacing, whining, unable to settle down or focus. Door dashing, fence jumping and assorted escape behaviors; wandering/roaming. Baying, howling, overbarking.

Barking/lunging at passersby, fence fighting. Lunging/barking at and fighting with other male dogs.

Noncompliant, pushy and bossy attitude towards caretakers and strangers. Lack of cooperation.

Resistant; an unwillingness to obey commands; refusal to come when called. Pulling/dragging of handler outdoors; excessive sniffing; licking female urine.

Sexual frustration; excessive grooming of genital area. Sexual excitement when petted. Offensive growling, snapping, biting, mounting people and objects. Masturbation.

A heightened sense of territoriality, marking with urine indoors. Excessive marking on outdoor scent posts.

The behaviors described above can be attributed to unneutered male sexuality. The male hormone testosterone acts as an accelerant making the dog more reactive. As a male puppy matures and enters adolescence his primary social focus shifts from people to dogs; the human/canine bond becomes secondary. The limited attention span will make any type of training difficult at best.

If you are thinking about breeding your dog so he can experience sexual fulfillment ... don't do it! This will only let the dog 'know what he's missing' and will elevate his level of frustration. If you have any of the problems listed above, they will probably get worse; if you do not, their onset may be just around the corner.

Dogs can be neutered after 8 weeks of age and should be neutered before the onset of puberty (usually between 6 and 9 months) and before any of these undesirable behaviors appear. If a specific behavior is allowed to develop and become an established part of the dog's routine, it may be difficult to eliminate. This does not mean that if the dog is already exhibiting these behaviors you should not bother to have him neutered. **Neutering does facilitate retraining of the dog.** More often than not, habituated behaviors can be greatly reduced or eliminated if the male has been castrated prior to the beginning of serious retraining efforts.

Micky Niego, Companion Animal Services  
©ASPCA, REVISED 2001