



# Ways to control breeding in dogs and cats



## Surgical desexing

### Who can give it?

Vets only

### How long does it last?

Permanent (lasts as long as the animal lives)

### What animals?

Dogs and cats

Females and males

Pregnant or not

Young, adult or old



### Cost per procedure/dose

Depends on what the vet charges. Per animal desexed, usually works out around \$250



### Cost per animal (over lifetime)

Depends on what the vet charges. Per animal desexed, usually works out between \$150 - \$600 as a one-off cost



### Good things

- It only needs to be done once and is a permanent and highly effective way to stop breeding
- Desexed animals live longer and usually have stronger immune systems
- Surgical desexing removes the hormones, so females never come back on heat
- Desexed animals are less likely to get some types of disease
- Desexed animals put on weight, so they are often cheaper to feed
- Surgical desexing is good value for money if the animals live a long time



### Bad things

- Needs a vet in the community to do the operation. It takes a fair bit of the vet's and the EPH's time
- Each operation usually takes between a 20 and 40 minutes, plus the time spent talking to the owners, getting consent, catching and transporting the animal, waiting for it to wake up before it is taken home
- It can be a big investment of time (and cost) if the animals aren't living for very long after they are desexed
- It is a good idea to worm and vaccinate animals that are being desexed so they have the best chances of living a healthy life, but this does cost the program even more money
- There is a very small risk that the animal might die from the surgery or anaesthetic

## Hormonal injection (e.g. "Depo", previously Covinan®)

### Who can give it?

Vet or trained & authorised Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs)

### How long does it last?

Temporary (lasts around 3-6months)

### What animals?

Dogs and cats

Registered for females. Off-label use for males

Not recommended for pregnant animals

Can cause long term fertility issues if given to animals younger than 6 months of age



### Cost per procedure/dose

Depends on the size of the dog, but an average dog single dose around \$20



### Cost per animal (over 5 years)

For an average sized dog, if given every 3 months over 5 years, around \$400. More if the animal lives longer



### Good things

- Can be done by a trained and authorised EHP (under the vet's prescription)
- Doesn't involve an operation, is quick to give, and can be given at the animal's house
- Cheap in the short term (if animals are only living above 2 years)
- Can be done on a short-term basis (if owners are not sure yet if they want their animal desexed, or to let the animal get old enough to breed safely)
- Can be done on a short-term basis (if owners are not sure yet if they want their animal breeding before the next vet visit)



### Bad things

- One needle only lasts 3 months
- The needle can sting, so the animal might not like the vet or EHP
- Animals might need to be sedated before they are given the injection
- If the bottle gets too hot, the drug might not work
- If animals miss a needle after 3 months, they can breed again
- It does not work in about 3% of dogs
- If used long term, problems like infected uteruses and breast cancer can be more common
- May affect future fertility if given before puberty

## Deslorin implant (e.g. Suprelorin®)

### Who can give it?

Vet or trained & authorised Environmental Health Practitioners (EHPs)

### How long does it last?

Temporary (lasts around 6 or 12 months)

### What animals?

Registered for dogs only. Off-label use for cats  
 Registered for use in males only. Off-label use for females  
 More information needed to know if it is safe in pregnant animals  
 May be given to males at any age.  
 In females (off-label) it is better if given before her first heat



### Cost per procedure/dose

6 month implant: around \$80  
12 month implant: around \$140



### Cost per animal (over 5 years)

If given every 12 months over 5 years, around \$700. More if the animal lives longer



### Good things

- Can be done by trained and authorised EHPs (under the vet's prescription)
- Doesn't involve an operation, is quick to give, and can be implanted at the animal's house.
- Lasts longer than hormonal injections
- Good to use when owners are not sure yet if they want their animals to be permanently desexed, or to let a young animal grow bigger before breeding later on
- Can be used on its own to stop animal breeding, or in combination with surgical desexing



### Bad things

- Over 12 months, Suprelorin® costs more than hormonal injections (e.g. "Depo")
- The needle is quite big - animals can yelp and need to be held while the needle goes in. Sometimes, animals that are hard to hold might need to be sedated before they are given Suprelorin®
- When given to female animals that are older than 5 months, it can cause them to come on heat. During this heat, they can get pregnant even though they've had the implant
- It can be hard to find all of the animals that are due for an implant. If they get missed, they can breed
- The implant needs to be kept in the fridge until it is ready to be used
- It can cause uterus problems in female animals