

Desex Policy & Recommendations (in brief)

The timing of desexing is important. There is differing information and vet opinions on ideal times for desexing. Ultimately, We Love Dogs primary concern is to prevent further litters of puppies being born.

This is consistent with other rescues and is potentially a reputational issue for the trust. There are health considerations with desexing that can occur as a result of early desexing and delaying desexing. Advantages and disadvantages of desexing are:

Potential Disadvantages of Desexing

- *Both females and males can put on weight more easily once desexed, so it is a good idea to cut their feed by about 1/5th. The advantage of this is you will save money on dog food.*
- *Desexed dogs may grow slightly taller than non-desexed dogs.*
- *A small percentage of female dogs may develop occasional urine leakage as they get older. It is thought this may be more common in desexed dogs.*

Advantages of Desexing

- *Preventing unwanted pregnancies*
 - *Breeding can be very stressful and expensive, especially if the female ends up needing emergency vet care or puppies are unwell*
 - *It can be hard to rehome puppies*
 - *Pregnancy and pup rearing can be physically and emotionally difficult*
- *Prevent Cancer*
 - *Females: uterine, ovarian and mammary cancers can be prevented by early desexing*
 - *Males: desexing dramatically reduces or removes the chance of prostate cancer and testicular tumours*
- *Prevents other diseases*

In addition, some studies have shown that desexing females will increase their length of life.

With this in mind, We Love Dogs will organise desexing on the following timeline, with kgs being expected final weight when fully grown.

- *Females under 30kg (approx 6 months)*
- *Females over 30kg (approx 6 months)*
- *Males under 30kg (approx 6 months)*
- *Males over 30kg (approx 12 months)*

De-sexing both male and female dogs that are not intended for breeding before they reach puberty is an effective tool to prevent overpopulation and unwanted dogs. The procedure can also improve an individual dog's welfare by reducing risks associated with straying (e.g. road traffic accidents/dog fights), infections and some cancers (Root Kustritz, 2012). While desexing before puberty is ideal for the majority of dogs, some male dogs from large breeds may benefit from delaying the procedure until they are fully grown.