

Owner Preferences for Female Dog Sterilization Techniques

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In the Literature

Hsueh C, Giuffrida M, Mayhew PD, et al. Evaluation of pet owner preferences for operative sterilization techniques in female dogs within the veterinary community. *Vet Surg.* 2018;47(S1):O15-O25.

FROM THE PAGE ...

In this study, students, faculty, and staff at 5 veterinary teaching hospitals who were current or former dog owners were surveyed for their opinions of which spay technique they preferred for their own dogs. Survey options included open celiotomy, single-port or 2-port laparoscopy, or natural orifice transluminal endoscopic surgery (NOTES). If a laparoscopic procedure was selected, the survey respondent was asked how much more he or she would be willing to pay as compared with an open spay technique.

The overall survey response rate was 33.2%. Although the majority of total respondents were women, veterinarian respondents were more likely to be male and older than 35 years of age. A majority of those surveyed (77.8%) chose a laparoscopic spay as their first choice, although most respondents were unwilling to pay more than \$200 above the open spay cost. Veterinarians and respondents over 35 years of age were significantly more likely to choose open laparotomy as their first choice. Owners of giant-breed dogs, veterinarians, and male respondents were significantly more likely to pay more than \$200 for a minimally invasive procedure. NOTES, an emerging technique in both human and veterinary medicine, was the least chosen option, possibly due to its designated experimental status on the survey.

... TO YOUR PATIENTS

Key pearls to put into practice:

- 1** Laparoscopic procedures can be beneficial for minimizing postoperative pain, as they typically involve less scarring and smaller incisions. These benefits allow for faster return to function with potentially fewer complications, which would be a significant advantage for owners trying to rest young, active dogs.
- 2** If these results provide an accurate barometer for future general public opinion, laparoscopic procedures can be expected to become increasingly prevalent and more frequently requested in private practice. Clinicians in private practice who wish to foster this option may benefit from advanced training.
- 3** The prevalence of low-cost spay/neuter clinics has forced many veterinarians to redefine their practice offerings. Providing laparoscopic options, although more expensive, may increase traffic back to the traditional setting of private practice. Dog owners, especially those of large- and giant-breed dogs, may be more likely to select this option if offered by their own veterinarian.
- 4** Laparoscopic spay can be paired with a prophylactic gastropexy in dog breeds prone to developing gastric dilatation-volvulus to provide maximal benefit with a single anesthetic episode. Cryptorchid surgery can also be performed via this method.

Suggested Reading

- Devitt CM, Cox RE, Hailey JJ. Duration, complications, stress, and pain of open ovariohysterectomy versus a simple method of laparoscopic-assisted ovariohysterectomy in dogs. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* 2005;227(6):921-927.
- Dupré G, Fiorbianco V, Skalicky M, Gültiken N, Ay SS, Findik M. Laparoscopic ovariectomy in dogs: comparison between single portal and two-portal access. *Vet Surg.* 2009;38(7):818-824.
- MacPhail CM. Surgery of the reproductive and genital systems. In: Fossum TW, ed. *Small Animal Surgery.* 4th ed. St. Louis, MO: Elsevier; 2013:780-855.