Nimble Veterinary Hospital West Ryde · (02) 9129 5551

Desexing your dog: owner guide

Timing, preparation and aftercare for dogs.

KEY POINTS

- NSW Pet Registry recommends desexing dogs **by 6 months**. A once-only additional fee applies after that ($198 as at July 2026; fees change, check the NSW Pet Registry).
- Small breeds: around 6 months. Medium breeds: usually 6 to 12 months. Large and giant breeds: often better to wait until growth is largely complete (commonly 12 months or later). Talk to us **before 6 months**; any vet recommendation to delay needs to be arranged before your dog turns 6 months.
- Fast food from the night before; water is fine until the morning. Most dogs go home the same day and need **10 to 14 days** of restricted activity.

Getting ready

- **Fasting:** no food from the night before. Water is fine until the morning.
- Tell us about health conditions, medications, recent illness, or if a female may be in heat or has recently had a litter or false pregnancy.
- Check vaccinations are up to date.
- Bring your dog on a lead after a toilet break.
- Set up a quiet, warm, clean recovery space away from stairs, other pets and young children.

What happens on the day

- **Admission:** check-in, consent form, questions about the procedure and costs.
- **Pre-anaesthetic check:** a physical exam, and possibly intravenous fluids depending on age and health.
- **Recommended blood test:** an in-house pre-surgical blood test checks how organs such as the kidneys and liver are working and can pick up hidden problems. It's an extra cost; we're happy to go through it with you.
- **Pain relief and sedation**, then **surgery** under general anaesthetic with monitoring throughout.
- **Recovery** in a warm, monitored area, then home, usually the same afternoon. A nurse will go through the discharge instructions and medications and book any recheck.

Aftercare at a glance

- Expect drowsiness at first. Offer a small meal and water in the evening; slightly reduced appetite the first night is normal.
- Keep the Elizabethan collar or recovery suit on **at all times**, including overnight.
- Lead-only toilet breaks: no running, jumping, rough play or off-lead time.
- Keep the wound clean and dry; no baths or swimming until healed.
- Give only the pain relief we prescribe. Many human medications are toxic to pets.
- Recheck, and skin stitch removal if needed, at about 10 to 14 days. Males stay fertile for a few weeks after castration.
- Watch the weight: desexed dogs burn fewer calories. Ask us about portions.

CALL US STRAIGHT AWAY IF YOU NOTICE

- Bleeding or dripping from the wound, an opening wound, or a growing swelling
- Pale gums, laboured breathing, collapse or marked weakness
- Persistent vomiting, or no interest in food or water the day after surgery

Before surgery checklist

- [ ] Update NSW Pet Registry details after desexing (we'll give you the paperwork)
- [ ] No food after tonight's last meal; water okay until morning
- [ ] Vaccinations up to date
- [ ] Told the team about any medications, illness or if my dog may be in heat
- [ ] Recovery space ready: quiet, warm, clean, away from stairs and other pets
- [ ] Lead, and a toilet break before drop-off
- [ ] Booked the recheck/discharge appointment

Aftercare checklist (next 10 to 14 days)

- [ ] Collar or recovery suit on at all times, including overnight
- [ ] Wound checked at least twice a day (mild redness/swelling early on is normal; heat, discharge or an opening wound is not)
- [ ] Lead-only toilet breaks. No running, jumping or rough play
- [ ] Wound kept clean and dry; no baths or swimming
- [ ] Pain relief given as prescribed
- [ ] Small meal and water offered the evening of surgery
- [ ] Male dogs kept away from unspayed females for a few weeks
- [ ] Recheck attended and stitches removed if needed (10 to 14 days)
- [ ] Diet and portions reviewed to prevent weight gain

Contact us

Nimble Vets

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Phone: **(02) 9129 5551**
nimblevets.com.au

sash+
Small Animal Specialist Hospital

After hours emergencies
Our closest 24-hour hospital:
SASH Sydney (North Ryde)
1 Richardson Place, North Ryde NSW 2113
Phone: **(02) 9889 0289**
Open 24 hours, 7 days

SASH is a separate, independent hospital and is not affiliated with Nimble Veterinary Hospital. We've listed it as the closest 24-hour emergency hospital available to our patients.

General information only, not a substitute for veterinary advice. Please follow any specific instructions given to you by our team. Full guide: nimblevets.com.au/pet-health/desexing-dogs-cats-rabbits