**Ask Dr. OES**

**A Column from the Health and Research Committee**

**Send your questions to oeshealth@gmail.com.**

**Dear Dr. OES,**

I am trying to decide which is better, the traditional spay or the laparoscopic spay. Why is the laparoscopic spay so much more expensive?

**Sticker Shocked in Washington DC**

**Dear Sticker Shocked,**

There are several differences between the traditional spay and the laparoscopic spay.

The traditional spay (open surgical spay) is a single 5 - 10 cm incision removing the ovaries and the uterus. The laparoscopic spay usually has 3 small incisions (0.32 to 1.27 cm) and removes only the ovaries. The laparoscopic surgery is not recommended for a required spay due to pyometra since the uterus is not removed.

Incisions heal side to side so the healing and post-operative pain is similar with either procedure. Your dog may experience pain and bruising, but the pain can be managed with medication. In some cases, a conventional spay may require an overnight stay. Please note there are thousands of these traditional surgical spays done every day and has been a successful way to desex a bitch for many years.

When making the decision of a conventional spay versus a laparoscopic spay, the major factor is the surgeon. The procedure that the veterinarian has most experience doing is the one that likely will be a quicker surgery, less painful for the bitch, and require less recovery time.

The cost of a laparoscopic spay can be much more than a traditional spay due to specialized equipment used in this procedure. The maintenance on that equipment results in these higher costs being passed on to the client.

Dr. OES



**Dear Dr. OES,**

I saw some “health tested” puppies for sale that were from “health tested” parents. What exactly does that mean?

**Perplexed in**

**Poughkeepsie, NY**

**Dear Perplexed,**

“Health tested” can have different meanings depending on who says it. When some breeders say their puppies’ parents are health tested, they mean the veterinarian has examined them and they appear to be in good physical health. Usually in this exam, the vet listens to the heart and lungs, and physically checks the eyes, ears, mouth, etc. This is like the annual vet exam many of us are used to.

When other breeders say the parents are health tested, they mean they performed the 4 tests OESCA requires before breeding: EIC, hip dysplasia, eye exam, and autoimmune thyroid test. In addition to the required tests, some breeders will also perform the 5 tests OESCA recommends: cardiac, hearing, MDR1, CA, and PCD.

If the breeder states the puppies are health tested, they either mean that the vet examined them or that they performed the genetic tests, eye exam, and hearing test. Sometimes they mean both, the vet exam and the genetic tests. The puppies for sale are usually too young for accurate hip x-rays, cardiac evaluation, or autoimmune thyroid tests.

Asking for clarification on what they mean by “health testing” is the best answer to your question. If they have done the OESCA requirements, they will have the documentation to prove it and should be willing to share that information with you, as a potential puppy buyer.

Please see the following website for more information: https://oldenglishsheepdogclubofamerica.org/about-us/health-registries.

Dr. OES