

## Dog Marking in the House

**Neutering a dog can help reduce his marking behavior.**

*By Jon Geller, DVM*

Q. I have a 3-year-old Border Collie and my question is: Can he still be neutered? I have a problem with him urinating in the house, and I was told that if he was neutered, he would stop this. I have four cats, and I feel that he might feel overwhelmed by them and that's why he urinates in the house. The only rooms he doesn't seem to do this in are my bedroom and bathroom. Help!

A. By all means, have your 3-year-old Border Collie neutered! There is no reason not to do so unless you are specifically going to use him for breeding. In addition to decreasing territorial behavior, such as marking, neutering your dog will also help decrease future medical problems, including prostate infections and testicular cancer.

It sounds like your dog is using your house (other than your bedroom and bathroom) as his "marked" territory to send a "get lost" message to your clan of cats.

Although neutering will decrease marking behavior, in this case it may not eliminate it because now the marking, or urinating, is a learned behavior.

After he is neutered, you may want to get a product known as "pheromones" that can be sprayed around the house to help discourage marking behavior. There are other products that discourage dogs from urinating, and their effectiveness is variable depending on the dog.

I hate to tell you this, but you may also have to get your house recarpeted, and disinfect/repaint any walls or hard surface floors to get rid of any previous urine scent. For a while, you may not want to leave your dog unattended in the house, so he cannot resume his habit.

Multiple pet households are always a challenge, but hopefully the extra trouble/expense/frustration is worth the entertainment value.

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