

Ms. Wilson,

My name is Dr. Adam Winn. I am the staff veterinarian of the Humane Society of Charlotte and as such I perform the majority of the surgeries at the Spay/Neuter Clinic. I am responding to your questions regarding our surgery facility. I apologize for the tardiness of my reply. With the power outages and the hustle/bustle of the holiday season I am sure you will understand.

Our website has recently been updated and I hope that you will take the time to refer to the Spay/Neuter Clinic's information in it's entirety. It has a very interesting history.

As I am sure you are aware, the purpose of the clinic is to help people that could not otherwise afford to have their pets "fixed" to do so. For this reason we keep the prices of our surgeries low (actually the city determines our prices but that is another story). It would be naive to assume that we use the most expensive anesthetics available at some veterinary clinics just as it would be naive to assume that all veterinary clinics do everything the same way. We lose money with every surgery we do and this cost is incurred by Patti Lewis (the Humane Society of Charlotte president) and by the non-profit Humane Society of Charlotte in an effort to help alleviate pet overpopulation.

I graduated from the University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine in May of 1997. I practiced at a private small animal hospital in Chattanooga, TN for 2 years and then moved to Charlotte with my wife. I have been at the Spay/Neuter Clinic for approximately 3 1/2 years and in that time I have performed about 20,000 surgeries.

We guarantee the same quality of the surgery itself that you would get at any veterinary hospital anywhere. This is not to say that we provide all the extras available at your regular veterinary clinic. Remember that you get what you pay for. We do not provide pre-operative bloodwork, fancy equipment monitoring, IV catheters or fluids, pain medication for the post-operative period, or the more individualized attention that you would pay much more for (and rightly so!) at your Dr. Michael Thomann's office. It would be naive to assume the contrary. We average about 25 surgeries per day (significantly more than any private veterinary clinic in town).

You asked if we use "only the latest suture materials available". This is an odd question because there are not exactly a plethora of new suture materials developed from year to year. We use the same suture materials used by most veterinary hospitals I am sure, keeping in mind that individual surgeons have individual preferences. We use chromic catgut, Vicryl, or Monocryl depending on the surgeon and on the patient (not that these are likely to mean much to you). The Monocryl itself costs us more than \$4 per package. With at least one package per animal it can be quite expensive.

You asked if we could guarantee that your "pet recovers completely in less than 30 minutes." I would love to meet any veterinarian that could make such a promise with a straight face. Anesthesia has its risks. We

do not use a magic wand to spay or neuter your pet. Sometimes under the best of circumstances a patient does not wake up EVER in any hospital-human or animal. Our mortality rate for dogs is about 0.01%, for cats is about 0.1%, and for rabbits is about 5%. These numbers are very good and I am very proud of them. Because we use less expensive anesthetic agents (ace/atropine as premeds; pentothal or telazol for induction; and halothane for maintenance), our patients tend to sleep longer than they would if newer and much more expensive drugs were used. Is sleeping bad? No. Do patients sleep for a shorter period post-operatively at Dr. Michael Thomann's office? Some probably do.

In summary, the Spay/Neuter Clinic is not your regular veterinarian. We do, however, provide a valuable service for poor people. Also, you get what you pay for. In our free market economy people are free to choose the quality of service that they wish to pay for. It is up to these people to educate themselves (as you are doing) as to the differences.

Please feel free to forward this message to Dr. Thomann. Thank you for your time and Happy Holidays.

--- Dr. Adam Winn

staff veterinarian of The Humane Society of Charlotte

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