



SHELTER MEDICINE

Giving Every Animal, No Matter Where They Live, a Happy, Healthy Life

Morris Animal Foundation funds shelter medicine health studies so more underserved animals – pets waiting for adoption as well as free-roaming, stray animals – receive the very best healthcare and a chance at a full, healthy life. Wherever an animal lives – in a foster home, in a shelter or in our neighborhoods – we are here funding the best science to improve the health and well-being of underserved animals everywhere.

EVERY YEAR, IN THE UNITED STATES ALONE

6,000,000+
CATS AND DOGS ENTER SHELTERS

3,200,000
SHELTER ANIMALS ARE ADOPTED

3,000,000
SHELTER ANIMALS ARE EUTHANIZED

TRIPLE THREAT – OVERPOPULATION, DISEASE, BEHAVIOR

It's no mystery why we continue to have so many stray and free-roaming dogs and cats in the United States, why many wind up in shelters, and what we need to do to make things better. Overpopulation continues to be an ongoing concern, as are infectious disease and problematic behavior. These are the areas where Morris Animal Foundation is focusing its efforts, making progress toward a day when every dog and cat has a loving home.

40+ MILLION STRAY CATS ROAM FREELY IN OUR COMMUNITIES

2% of stray cats are spayed or neutered

INFECTIOUS DISEASE

The risk of disease transmission rises when animals are closely housed together, such as in shelters and rescue facilities. Even with strict disease protocols, the introduction of new animals continually provides a window of opportunity for infectious disease to enter facilities. Some of these diseases are preventable and curable; others are not. Still others lead to lifelong health problems.

Continually upgrading infectious disease control and prevention is key to improving pet adoptability and lowering euthanasia rates. Easy-to-use, effective and cost-efficient treatments and surgeries also help shelter veterinarians provide life-saving services to underserved and deserving animals.

One solution is spay and neuter programs which are extremely effective at controlling overpopulation of cats. These programs have the added benefit of reducing the spread of diseases to other animals, including pets and wildlife. However, these programs - involving trapping, surgery, recovery and release - are labor intensive and costly, especially for economically disadvantaged communities where resources are limited or nonexistent. A less invasive and more cost-effective population strategy is desperately needed to reduce the number of free-roaming cats on a global scale.

DOGS

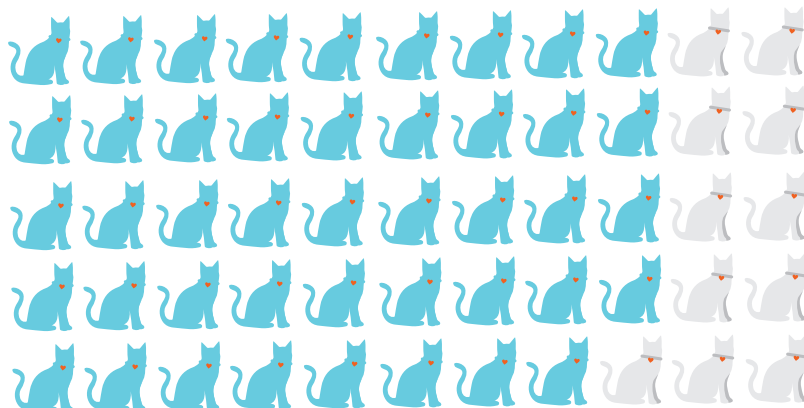
Approximately 3.3 million dogs enter the U.S. shelter system every year, with approximately 1.6 million subsequently adopted and about 620,000 returned to their owners. Although the number of dogs euthanized in U.S. shelters has declined - most recent figures estimate 670,000 annually - unwanted dogs continue to be a concern, particularly in select regions of the country. In other parts of the world, canine overpopulation continues to be a major concern where the majority of dogs are free-roaming.

OVERPOPULATION AND OTHER REASONS FOR TOO MANY UNWANTED ANIMALS

CATS

By some estimates, more than 40 million free-roaming cats live in the United States alone, and each year an estimated 3.4 million enter animal shelters, including house cats, feral cats and kittens. Almost three-quarters of animals euthanized in the shelter system are cats. These staggering statistics highlight just a fraction of the animal overpopulation problem worldwide.

In the United States, according to the ASPCA's National Rehoming Survey, pet problems are the most common reason that owners rehome their pet, accounting for 47 percent of rehomed dogs. These are defined as problematic behaviors, health problems and a pet growing larger than expected.



70% of cats in the shelter system are euthanized

8 OUT OF 10

EUTHANIZED ANIMALS ARE HEALTHY OR HAD A TREATABLE HEALTH PROBLEM

HOW WE ARE HELPING

Morris Animal Foundation has invested more than \$9 million in decades of research to improve the quality of life for shelter and free-roaming animals. Our primary research areas are infectious diseases, overpopulation, and housing and enrichment programs. As we continue to improve on all fronts, we are reducing the population of unwanted pets and increasing the likelihood that those needing homes will be alive when their forever families find them.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

CANINE FLU

Although a vaccine for canine flu exists, it is expensive, laborious to produce and only provides immunity to a few viral strains. Our funded researchers are working on a cost-effective, efficient and broadly protective vaccine for dogs and cats, both at-risk species for flu epidemics.

UPPER RESPIRATORY DISEASE

Shelter cats frequently suffer from upper respiratory infections, and may be euthanized to help control outbreaks. Our funding supported the development of novel, cost-effective treatments to combat the disease. Today, we are helping researchers develop a second-generation vaccine that provides clinical protection against a strain of feline herpesvirus that causes nearly 50 percent of upper respiratory tract infections in cats.

PARVOVIRUS

Our funding supported early development of the first parvovirus vaccine in the late 1970s, which has saved the lives of millions of dogs.

FELINE INFECTIOUS PERITONITIS

FIP is fatal to domestic cats and is especially devastating to young cats in shelters. The disease is difficult to diagnose, and there currently are no effective treatments. While more work still needs to be done, our funding helped identify broad-spectrum antiviral drugs with potential for treating cats in early stages of FIP. Other funding is supporting new ways to rapidly and easily diagnose FIP-suspect cases as well as predict if cats may be at higher risk to develop the disease.

FELINE PANLEUKOPENIA

In the last 10 to 15 years, feline panleukopenia, a highly fatal and contagious type of parvovirus, has re-emerged as a major cause of death in shelter-housed cats. Our funding is helping to support future vaccination strategies and biosecurity guidelines to protect and reduce fatalities in cats worldwide.

OVERPOPULATION

SPAY/NEUTER

Pain is an inevitable sequel to surgery. Our funding helped identify drugs to better manage postsurgical pain. These drugs are readily available and cost-effective for use by shelters and rescue groups that spay and neuter millions of cats and dogs each year.

CONTRACEPTIVE STRATEGIES

Free-roaming cats and dogs are a global problem; these animals suffer from high mortality, malnutrition and disease. We continue to support researchers in the discovery of non-invasive contraceptive methods to help safely and humanely curb reproduction, reduce impact of disease outbreaks and improve the overall health for millions of free-roaming cats and dogs worldwide.

LESS STRESS, LESS DISEASE

IMPROVED HOUSING

Many animals are confined to cages during their shelter stay, creating environmental stressors that affect their health and well-being. Our funding led to the design of more shelter cat-friendly cages that resulted in less illness in cats. Some shelters saw a 61 percent decrease in the number of "sick care days," reducing financial burden associated with caring for sick animals, so more resources can focus on adoption services. These cages are now standard caging for many shelter and rescue organizations worldwide.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

Our funded studies clearly show behavioral enrichment reduces stress in animals and improves health and adoptability of animals. These evolving programs have helped stressed and behaviorally problematic animals transform into adoptable, loving pets.

TAKING SHELTER MEDICINE INTO THE FUTURE

Changing the lives of animals around the world – for the better

With decades of funded research, we have made great strides in improving the health and well-being of millions of underserved animals. With the generosity of animal-loving people, we can do more. Together, we can generate the financial resources needed to support life-saving studies and solve lingering and emerging health issues for millions of shelter and free-roaming cats and dogs. Looking to the future, we will continue to:



Tackle new disease outbreaks

When a new disease emerges, we support the boots-on-the-ground investigators to figure out the complexities of the pathogen and find solutions for the problem.



Provide safe, cost-effective global contraception methods for dogs and cats

We are going on 30 years of supporting research to discover a nonsurgical and easily implementable method to control overpopulation of free-roaming dogs and cats. We know there are better solutions out there that need our support to make the world a better, healthier place for all animals.



Ensure more adoptable pets and less euthanasia due to major and minor health problems

We are here to make sure all animals get a fighting chance for a happy, healthy life.

With your support, we continue to improve the lives of millions of shelter and free-roaming dogs and cats around the world.

ABOUT MORRIS ANIMAL FOUNDATION

Morris Animal Foundation's mission is to bridge science and resources to advance the health of animals. Founded by a veterinarian in 1948, we fund and conduct critical health studies for the benefit of all animals.

Learn more at morrisanimalfoundation.org.

Contact us at mailbox@morrisanimalfoundation.org, 800.243.2345 or 720 S. Colorado Blvd., Suite 174A, Denver, CO 80246.