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This is the removal of a segment of the spermatic cord to stop the male being able to impregnate the female. It is an irreversible procedure. It does not reduce the smell from the skin glands nor does it reduce aggression. Vasectomised males will mate with females but will be unable to produce offspring.

Female ferrets (jills) come into season (oestrus) in spring and summer (March to September) as the day length begins to increase. They will stay in season either until mated or until day length reduces again. When in oestrus, the vulva of the jill will become swollen and they are receptive to mating. During this time they are subject to high levels of the hormone oestrogen. This can suppress the production of red blood cells and lead to a life threatening anaemia. Female ferrets can die from the subsequent anaemia unless brought back out of season. In the wild they are mated which stops their season but results in pregnancy. This is obviously not ideal in captivity! How can we stop her developing the anaemia and stop her cycling without having litter after litter of ferrets?

There are several different ways to stop a female ferret 'cycling' (coming into season):

- Spaying – the removal of the female reproductive tract
- Mating her with an intact (uncastrated) male
- Mating her with a vasectomised male
- Giving her hormone injections 'jill jabs'
- Implanting a hormonal contraceptive or Suprelorin implant

Spaying involves the removal of the ovaries and uterus and is very similar to the procedures performed routinely on dogs and cats. The benefits are that it avoids unwanted litters, stops the female from cycling (thereby stopping the risk of the anaemia) and significantly reduces the smell from the glands in the skin.

