



Castration/Spaying and your cat



Castration and your cat

What is castration and when should it be done?

Castration is the surgical removal of the testicles and is commonly referred to as 'neutering'. Performed as a minor surgical operation under general anaesthetic, usually the cat is admitted in the morning and collected later the same day. We recommend castrating cats at 5 months of age.

Why are male cats castrated?

The primary reason for castration is to prevent unwanted kittens from being produced. Other benefits include:

Roaming

Male cats roam, often quite far from home, seeking out females in heat. This roaming increases the dangers of road accidents, leads to fighting and consequent cat bite abscesses and the transfer of fatal infectious diseases. Neutered males are statistically proven to have a lower incidence of feline aids and leukaemia.

Spraying

A male cat marks out his territory by spraying urine. This scent marking is done by the cat backing up to an object, raising his tail and squirting urine onto the vertical surface of the object. The urine of a male cat has a very strong and offensive odour. Spraying is often done in the house, particularly if there is more than one cat in the household. Castrated cats will not usually mark territory and certainly do not have foul smelling urine.



Relationship to owners

Entire male cats can make good pets, but the owner is never the primary focus of their lives. A male cat likes to have a home and a kind owner, but will desert all these comforts for a female or if another male enters his territory. In fact the intact male usually only comes home to eat and sleep! Castrated cats, especially those neutered at 5 months, become more docile, affectionate and playful as the owner becomes the primary focus of their lives.

Unless you want to use a male cat for breeding purposes there are few advantages and a lot of disadvantages to keeping an entire male cat.

A castrated cat has fewer medical problems, eats less, lives much longer on average and does not add to the pet over-population problem and makes a more loving and rewarding pet.

Spaying and your cat

What is spaying and when should it be done?

Spaying or 'neutering' is the surgical removal of both the ovaries and uterus of a female cat. Performed as a routine surgical operation under general anaesthetic, the cat is admitted in the morning and usually collected later the same day. Generally the procedure is performed through a small incision on your cat's left flank, however it may be performed on the cat's belly in certain circumstances. Some owners elect to have the procedure performed on the belly in pedigree or show cats as there is a chance that the hair that is shaved for the procedure may regrow a slightly different colour. Although there is no harm in this, it may look a little strange and would not be ideal in the show ring. There is a small surcharge for a 'midline' spay as it takes longer to perform and requires a few more materials.



We recommend female cats are spayed at 5-6 months of age. If your cat has recently had kittens it can be spayed as soon as the kittens are weaned.

Why are female cats spayed?

The primary reason for spaying is to prevent unwanted kittens from being produced. Other benefits include:

Calling

Female cats, once sexually mature, are triggered to come into season, or call (i.e. be receptive to a male cat), by the photoperiod or length of daylight. This period of calling usually lasts from March to September for outdoor cats, but indoor cats exposed to artificial electric light can call all year round! Calling behaviour includes:

- A change in behaviour i.e. a friendly cat may become unsociable or an unfriendly cat become more attention seeking.
- Strange vocalisation which is often mistaken for the cat being in pain. This can go on through the night and is very disturbing for the owner.

Roaming

The desire to roam in order to find a mate increases the risk of fighting or road traffic accidents.

Unless you want to use a female for breeding purposes there are few advantages and many disadvantages to keeping an unneutered female cat.

Neutered cats have fewer medical problems, live longer on average, don't add to the pet overpopulation problem and make more loving and rewarding pets.

For more information please ask at reception.