

# WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SPAYING AND NEUTERING CATS



## Spaying

Female kittens should be spayed before six months of age and prior to her first heat. This is when her reproductive organs are nearing maturity but before her breast tissue develops.

Conditions that are prevented by the removal of the female reproductive organs & spaying early:

1. Eliminates the risk of mammary cancer
2. Rules out possibility of pyometra (a potentially fatal collection of pus in that reproductive organ)
3. Prevents vaginal hyperplasia (a gross swelling of the vaginal wall that occurs during the normal heat cycle)
4. Prevents uterine prolapse (the bulging of the uterus into the vagina)
5. Prevents a variety of infections of the uterus
6. Prevents uterine and ovarian cysts
7. Prevents cancer of the uterus and ovaries.

## Neutering

Male kittens should be neutered before six months of age. Some males hit full maturity at four months of age and could begin to reproduce if exposed to an intact female.

Conditions that are prevented with the removal of the male testes & neutering early:

1. Prevent the potential development of testicular cancer
2. Prevent the occurrence of an enlarged prostate gland
3. Prevent prostatic cancer
4. Eliminates the production of hormones that cause uncastrated males to roam
5. Reduces aggressive behavior towards other cats
6. Reduces or prevents spraying for marking territory outside and inside the house.

There is no reason not to spay and neuter cats in the early months of life. These procedures will help curb the feline overpopulation. According to the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, millions of feral and unwanted domestic cats are born each year and destined for a dismal existence. They are either abandoned or relegated to frequently overcrowded shelters and a grim existence that is often relieved by euthanasia. In 2022 alone, there were 530,000 cats euthanized in shelters within the United States.

