



Pet Health Information from Milford Animal Clinic

FRONT DECLAW IN CATS

Scratching with the front claws is normal behavior for cats and this activity keeps the nails sharp. Unfortunately, cats are not always as discriminate, as we may like them to be when deciding what to use to sharpen their claws with. For many cat owners, declawing is the only solution. A declawed cat should be confined indoors because the front claws are the primary means of defense. An indoor cat has little need for defense.

Declawing consists of the surgical removal of the third phalynx. The feet are bandaged, and the cat is hospitalized overnight. The bandages are removed the next day. Cats usually walk normal, but will be tender for a week or so. Post operatively, cats that are declawed need antibiotics to prevent infection at the surgical site. In addition, cats should not use a clumping litter for two weeks following a surgical declaw procedure. The clumping litter can become embedded in the incision site and cause an infection. We use Yesterday's News as the litter following declaws and have this available for you to purchase or see if your local pet store has anything similar.

Anesthesia

Declaws require general anesthesia and sterile operating technique. The procedure is generally performed at the same time as a routine spay or neuter, to minimize the number of times your pet has to undergo the risk of anesthesia. While under anesthesia, a technician will be monitoring the heart rate, respiration, and membrane color of your pet. The anesthetics we use are safe, but there are always risks associated with anesthetics.

The liver and kidneys are the main organs that filter out and eliminate anesthetics from the body. We offer in-house blood work that can be run prior to administration of anesthetics. This helps determine whether or not your pet may have a complication which may put them at a higher risk of undergoing the surgery.

If we do not know the vaccine and health status of your cat, we recommend testing for Feline Leukemia and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV). A cat that is positive for either of these viruses may have a delayed healing process and cause further complications.

Intravenous Fluid Therapy

The surgery should take 5-10 minutes. Anytime an animal is put under anesthetics, the kidneys are damaged. Studies have shown that if fluid therapy is used during the anesthetic time, the amount of kidney damage is minimized. Fluids are given directly in the vein with catheter placement. We recommend fluid therapy for all our surgical procedures to help maximize the time you have with your pet.

Analgesics (Pain Medicine)

After the castration, it will be necessary to restrict your cat's activity for 5 days. This allows the incision time to heal and strengthen without the added pressures that comes with exercise. There will be some discomfort associated with the surgery. In order to help minimize any discomfort and pain, we send home pain medications.

Internal and External Parasite Control

Before surgery, your cat should be free from internal and external parasites. If fleas are found during the pre-surgical examination, a mandatory treatment with Capstar will be given at the owner's expense. This medication kills all adult fleas within an hour, but is only effective for 24 hours. This prevents the fleas from crawling into the surgical site and jumping onto other animals while at our facility.

We stock three preventative flea control products which treat and prevent all life cycles of the flea for one month. We offer Comfortis, an oral flea preventative that provides protection for a month. In addition to flea control, Advantage Multi also treats and prevents against ear mites and contains a deworming medication. Frontline Plus is a product that kills and prevents only fleas and ticks. Both of these products are applied topically and are absorbed and distributed throughout your pet's skin coat. It can take up to three days for the topical products to



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become effective. These products are available for purchase or can be applied or administered upon your request.

Vaccinations

We recommend that your cat be vaccinated annually to provide prevention from upper respiratory and viral diseases that can be transmitted between cats, including FVRCP and Leukemia. By state law, all cats and dogs are required to be vaccinated for Rabies.

Microchip

Microchips have helped reunite thousands of pets with their families. We are glad to be a part of this process and recommend placing microchips during the time of your pet's neuter.

Contact Us for Details & Scheduling

Please call our office at (574) 658-4126 if you have any questions after reading this form or would like to schedule an appointment for your cat's front declaw.