



Why Spay or Neuter Your Cat?

It's Not Just About Kitten Prevention Anymore!

Population control. Health benefits. Behavioral improvements. These are some of the many reasons to spay or neuter your cat today!

Sadly, millions of cats and kittens are euthanized in the United States each year because there simply aren't enough homes for all of them. As a pet owner or care-giver, you can do your part to reduce the number of homeless cats and kittens. You'll also be helping our feline friends lead healthier and happier lives and while promoting a more enjoyable relationship between them and you.

In addition to providing the only fool-proof method of population control, studies have found that altering your cat may increase her lifespan an average of three to five years!

For **females**, sterilization – particularly when done before the first heat cycle – reduces the risk of developing devastating cancers of the mammary gland, uterus and ovaries, and helps to prevent life-threatening uterine infections.

Spaying can also improve females' behavior and hygiene. During the heat cycle, she may actively search for male cats to mate with. It is during this time that she is more likely to escape from the house, putting her in danger of encounters with other animals and traffic.

Since female cats are "spontaneous ovulators" (releasing eggs from their ovaries only after mating), they come into heat every two to three weeks until they are finally mated. During this time, being forced to remain inside, where mating is impossible, may cause a great deal of anxiety for her, often resulting in her howling, which no one enjoys! And female cats are prone to spraying urine during their heat cycles, a behavior that is difficult to control.

And while the idea of raising kittens may sound like fun, spaying can eliminate issues such as difficult births and having to find homes for the new kittens.

Neutering **male cats** provides equally important benefits. Unneutered male cats are prone to undesirable behaviors, such as urine spraying to mark their territories. Often

these manners lead owners to abandon their male cats or placing them in shelters. Neutering dramatically reduces the likelihood of this unpleasant behavior.

Due to the high levels of testosterone in their bodies, unneutered male cats are more likely to be aggressive toward their human companions. And fighting among unneutered males is far more common, resulting in bite wounds, abscesses and transmission of various parasites and diseases. Males that have not been altered are also more apt to wander in search of female cats, increasing the likelihood that they will be lost or hit by cars.

In addition, neutering your male cat virtually eliminates the possibility of testicular tumors and cancers and drastically reduces the risk of prostate cancer, thereby increasing the likelihood that he will live a long and healthy life.

Finally, neutering your male cat is simply the right thing to do. While you will not directly face the kittens that result from his mating behaviors, your cat will be contributing to cat overpopulation.

Join us today in our effort to eliminate feline overpopulation and improve cat health and behavior. Contact Second Chance Fund for Animal Welfare to make an appointment for one of our affordable, accessible spay/neuter clinics. www.secondchancefund.org, (978) 779-8287, email info@secondchancefund.org