

# SPAYING *Your Cat*

## *What Are the Benefits of Spaying?*

There are numerous reasons why you should spay your cat! Spaying is not only a reliable way to prevent an unwanted pregnancy but it also prevents many health problems. It helps to eliminate the risk of ovarian or uterine cancer, and if performed early in life, it significantly reduces the risk of breast cancer. It can help improve certain behavioral problems and they will no longer have the symptoms associated with heat cycles.



## What Is a Spay?

A spay, also known as an ovariohysterectomy (ovario – hyster – ectomy) involves the removal of the entire uterus and both ovaries.

## *At Home Preparation for Surgery*

Prior to your pet's appointment, we will ask you to remove your pet's food bowl the night before surgery and to withhold food & water on the day of surgery. This is so that your pet has an empty stomach before anesthesia which reduces the risk of vomiting during the procedure.

## *During Your Pre-Surgical Appointment*

During the appointment before surgery, we will recommend a pre-surgical evaluation. This evaluation will include a physical examination to ensure that your pet is healthy. Pre-anesthetic blood work will be recommended and is designed to help identify any problems that may increase the risks associated with the surgery or anesthesia. Several medical conditions can be identified using pre-anesthetic blood work such as; infection, anemia (a low number of red blood cells), low blood sugar, inadequate blood-clotting ability, liver disease and kidney disease.

## How Is a Spay Performed?

Before the surgery begins, your pet will be given a sedative and general anesthesia. This keeps your pet still, asleep and completely pain free during the operation. Throughout anesthesia and surgery, monitoring equipment is used to constantly measure heart rate, breathing, and oxygenation. The traditional spay procedure is performed through a small incision near the belly button. During the procedure, both ovaries and the uterus are located and removed. Any affected blood vessels are tied off to prevent bleeding. After the surgery, your pet is monitored in a recovery area until she is awake and stable enough to go home.



## At-Home Care After a Spay

Even the best and most successful surgery can result in complications if postoperative care is inadequate. We will review your home-care instructions before you take your pet home. Be sure to follow all instructions carefully and contact us if you have questions or concerns after you get home. *Here are just a few tips:*

Food and water: You may be tempted to give your pet a large meal after she returns home from being spayed. Don't! Smaller meals are generally recommended for the first day.

Stitches: The stitches are underneath the skin and the suture material is dissolvable and does not need to be removed. Check the incision regularly for swelling, bleeding, bruising, or discharge and report any problems.

Protecting the incision: Your pet should not be permitted to lick or bite the incision. This can open the incision or cause a serious infection. Your pet may need to wear an Elizabethan collar to prevent tampering with the incision and stitches. This collar is a plastic cone that fits over your pet's head (like an upside-down lamp shade) to prevent licking or biting of the surgical area.

Medication: Be sure to give all medications as directed. If your pet vomits after receiving medication or has other complications, please call us.

Activity restriction: Running, jumping or using stairs should be avoided (if possible) for approximately 7-10 days after undergoing surgery. Excessive activity can cause pain, bleeding, swelling of the incision, and other complications. Even if your pet seems perfectly fine and wants to be active, continue activity restriction as recommended.



*We look forward to welcoming you & your pet at our hospital.*