

## Facts and Myths About Spaying

**Myth:** *Cats are supposed to have one litter; it's good for them.*

**Fact:** Mammary (breast) cancer is one of the most common types of cancers in cats, and sadly, it can be prevented almost 100% of the time by spaying before the first heat. Failure to spay until after the first heat increases the risk of breast cancer by 10%.

**Myth:** *Letting my cat have kittens is a good way for my family to witness the "miracle of life."*

**Fact:** Over 2 million cats are euthanized in shelters each year; many are kittens from litters whose owners couldn't find homes for them. Anybody considering allowing their cat to have a litter should have a plan to adopt out the kittens; otherwise the "miracle of life" may be replaced by the sadness of relinquishment.

Your cat's surgery appointment is scheduled for:

Please have her here by 8 AM on that date. She can have as much water as she wants, but no food after 8 PM the night before.

We recommend keeping your cat here overnight after surgery to ensure she is quiet during the immediate 24 hours after surgery. This period is most crucial to the healing of her incision. She will be able to go home the next day at 8:30 AM.

## Costs and Explanations

### Cat Spay

less than 12 mos.	\$228.56
older than 12 mos.	\$242.60

All expenses are expected to be paid in full at the time of discharge.

### Explanation of Costs

The charges for the surgery include a discount ranging somewhere between \$150 to \$180. This discount is our donation to helping fight pet overpopulation. Normal surgical time charges are around \$4 per minute; nearly 100% of these charges are discounted.

IV catheterization and fluid delivery is performed for every spay. This significantly decreases the risk of problems with anesthesia as well as gives us a route to deliver emergency medications should problems develop. We also use several monitors to track your cat's heart rate, rhythm, blood pressure, and blood oxygenation.

We aggressively use pain control on our spays. Each cat receives a peri-operative anti-inflammatory injection and opioid pain relief. We give you the option of purchasing additional opioid-based pain medication to take home as well.

Our clinic staffs two technicians to assist the doctor in surgery, giving us more eyes, ears, and hands to manage our patients. Including the surgeon, there are three highly-trained professionals present completely devoted to the well-being of your cat.

We are completely aware that there are low-cost options for this procedure in the Twin Ports. You have the right to know that there is an association between cost of care and quality of that care. We believe anesthesia and surgery are not casual medical procedures, and no clinic should ever sacrifice quality of care for volume. When your cat is under anesthesia, 100% of our focus is on her well-being and the prevention of complications.

Grand Avenue  
Veterinary Clinic



## Spaying Your Cat



Serving the healthcare needs of pets and their families in West Duluth and the Arrowhead region since 1985.

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There is a fair amount of confusion about the merits and drawbacks to spaying a female cat. We at Grand Avenue Veterinary Clinic hope you'll take this information into account.

### SHOULD SHE BE SPAYED?

The only time your pet should not be spayed is if you absolutely know you are going to breed it. Millions of animals are euthanized year after year simply because there is no home for them. They sit for months in shelters hoping for a chance at life, and unfortunately there aren't enough people like you out there that are willing to take them home.

Probably the only time a female cat should be bred is if it is a purebred. This means you have documentation certifying the cat is a purebred. Otherwise, there are plenty of "generic" domestic cats out there, and another litter will do nothing for the overpopulation problem. We invite you to visit Animal Allies to see the results of people failing to have their cats fixed.

There is no downside to spaying a cat. Consider the following benefits to sterilization:

- **Behavior Modification:** A female cat in heat can be a behavioral nightmare. Many will be affectionate to the point of being bothersome, while others will make frighteningly loud "yowling" noises, sometimes through the night. Intact female cats can also be significantly more territorial, resulting in unwanted behaviors like urine marking and aggression.
- **Feline Leukemia:** The most common fatal infectious disease in cats, Feline Leukemia, is com-

monly spread through breeding. Without the ability to breed, a female cat cannot be infected through this reservoir.

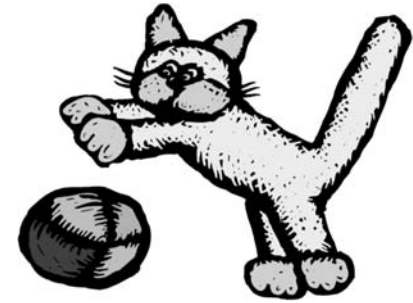
- **Reproductive Disease:** While not as common as in dogs, uterine infections and ovarian cancer can be heartbreaking to have a beloved pet endure. If the cat has been spayed, she cannot get uterine or ovarian disease.
- **Mammary Cancer:** Cats which are spayed before their first heat cycle have their risk of developing mammary cancer reduced by over 99%. Repeated exposure to the hormones of the heat cycle significantly increase the risk of this deadly disease.

If you still have any doubt as to whether or not your cat should be spayed, you need to ask yourself one very simple question: is there a reason it should not be sterilized? Unless you have a registered purebred cat, there is nothing to be gained from allowing your cat to have a litter, except for heartbreak and disappointment. You may not see these end results yourself, but for each kitten that enters the world right now, many others are being euthanized.

### WHEN SHOULD SHE BE SPAYED?

Your cat should be spayed between four and six months of age. Females usually have their first heat cycle around six months, and, as mentioned previously, spaying a female before her first heat cycle almost completely eliminates the occurrence of mammary cancer. We often recommend scheduling the procedure two weeks after the last set of kitten vaccines are given.

It is important to note that any cat at any age can be sterilized. There is no "window of opportunity" that can be missed. It is often slightly more expensive to sterilize an older cat because the surgery can be more labor-intensive. However, the benefits still far outweigh the price.



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