

## WHAT IS MEANT BY CASTRATION OR NEUTERING?

Neutering and castration are the common terms used to describe the surgical procedure known scientifically as orchidectomy or orchiectomy. In this procedure, both testicles are removed in order to sterilize a male cat.

## WHY SHOULD I HAVE MY CAT NEUTERED?

Neutering is very beneficial to the health of the cat, especially if performed at an early age. Following puberty, which occurs at approximately eight to nine months of age, the male cat often develops a number of undesirable behavioral changes. He will become territorial and start to mark areas, even inside the house, by spraying urine. This urine has a particularly offensive odor and is difficult to remove. As the tomcat reaches sexual maturity, he will start to enlarge his territory, straying ever farther from the house, particularly at night. It is for this reason that many of the cats that are hit by automobiles are non-neutered males. By increasing the size of his territory, he increases the likelihood that he will come into contact with other cats and will get into fights for territorial dominance. Inflicted fight wounds can result in severe infections and abscesses. Diseases such as FIV and FeLV, which can cause AIDS-like syndromes and cancers in cats, are spread through cat bites. These cats are most commonly affected by such incurable diseases. Last, but not least, neutering prevents unwanted litters and the needless deaths of tens of millions kittens and cats each year.

The longer a tomcat sprays and fights, the less likely neutering will stop these behaviors.

## WHEN SHOULD I HAVE MY CAT NEUTERED?

In most cases, it is recommended to neuter your cat before the onset of puberty. Puberty normally begins between six and ten months of age. The actual age chosen for castration will depend upon the preference

of your veterinarian. Many veterinarians recommend castration at around six months of age. Please contact your veterinary hospital for further details regarding their specific sterilization policies.

## WHAT DOES THE OPERATION INVOLVE?

We recommend taking your cat in to the clinic for pre-anesthetic bloodwork a week prior to surgery. This bloodwork is very important as it can detect any abnormalities, most importantly in the liver and kidneys, which are the organs mostly responsible for metabolizing and eliminating the anesthetic drugs. Should an abnormality be detected in the bloodwork, we will alter our anesthetic protocol to be safe for your pet, or in some cases surgery may need to be postponed until the abnormality is resolved to ensure your pet's well-being. Furthermore, you will be sent home with Gabapentin – a medication that is part of our anesthetic protocol and is at no charge to you. The reason we dispense this is because it helps make patients more comfortable when being left at the clinic for their surgical procedure. It allows us to decrease the anesthesia given for surgery as the more calm a patient is, the more effective the anesthesia will be. It also helps patients during recovery as it decreases stress and anxiety when waking up.

Your cat will undergo a general anesthetic. You will need to withhold food for twelve (12) hours prior to surgery. However, your pet should have free access to water during most of the pre-operative fasting period. Your veterinarian will advise you how long to withhold water before surgery.

In male cats, both of the testicles are removed through a small incision in the scrotum. Since the incisions are very small, and since stitches may cause irritation of the sensitive skin of the scrotum, it is rare for the incisions to be sutured.

# Neutering Your Cat



Hôpital vétérinaire  
**EMBRUN**  
Veterinary Hospital

## WHAT SURGICAL COMPLICATIONS COULD ARISE?

In general, complications are rare during castration surgery, however, as with all surgical procedures, there are always small risks:

### Anesthetic complication

It is always possible that any pet could have an adverse reaction following the administration of any drug. Such cases are impossible to predict, but fortunately are extremely rare.

One potential danger arises from the cat not being fasted properly prior to anesthesia. It is essential that all instructions are strictly followed.

In addition, any signs of illness should be reported to your veterinarian prior to an operation.

### Post-operative infection

This may occur internally or around the incision wound. In most cases the infection can be controlled with antibiotics.

## DID YOU KNOW?

- **Roaming:** More than 90% will reduce this behavior with neutering.
- **Fighting:** More than 90% will reduce this behavior with neutering.
- **Urine marking:** More than 90% will reduce this behavior with neutering.



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