

East End Veterinary Medical Centre

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Declawing in Cats (Onychectomy)

Client Handout

General Information:

Scratching with the front claws is normal, instinctive behavior for cats. The purpose of this activity is to remove old, worn fragments of nails. Though scratching is normal for cats, this behavior can be destructive and costly in the home. For many cat owners, declawing is the only solution.

A declawed cat should be confined indoors, since the claws are its primary means of defense. A house cat has little need for defense and is a more suitable pet since it can no longer ruin furnishing or scratch people

Surgical Procedure:

Declawing (onychectomy) is performed under general anesthesia and consists of surgical removal of the nail bed. The feet are usually bandaged, and the cat may be hospitalized briefly. After the bandages are removed Nero will be able to walk normally, though tenderness may be evident for up to 1 week.

Home Care:

1) Exercise:

Restricting exercise is difficult, however, you should prevent your pet from jumping as much as possible for the first 5 days.

2) Bleeding:

Occasionally a cat breaks open one of the small scabs where the nail was removed. A few drops of blood followed by rapid cessation of bleeding is normal. Call the doctor if bleeding persists. You can wrap your pet's feet with a paper towel and masking tape to apply pressure.

3) Litter Box:

You may have been told to use Yesterdays' News cat litter. This is made from recycled newspapers and should be used for a week to 10 days in place of regular litter. This will help to prevent your pet from developing an infection! (If your pet was not sent home with this special litter, shredded newspaper is a good substitute or Yesterday's News can be purchased at most pet stores and some grocery stores).

5) << Do NOT make your pet walk up or down steps to get to his food or litter box! >>

Notify the Doctor if any of the following occur:

- 1) Neroour pet feet appear swollen or bleed frequently.
- 2) Your pet is reluctant to walk.
- 3) There is a change in your pet's general health or behavior.

Thank you for trusting us with the care of your pet!
The staff of East End Veterinary Medical Centre