

BRIARPOINTE VETERINARY CLINIC

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OVARIOHYSTERECTOMY OR SPAY SURGERY

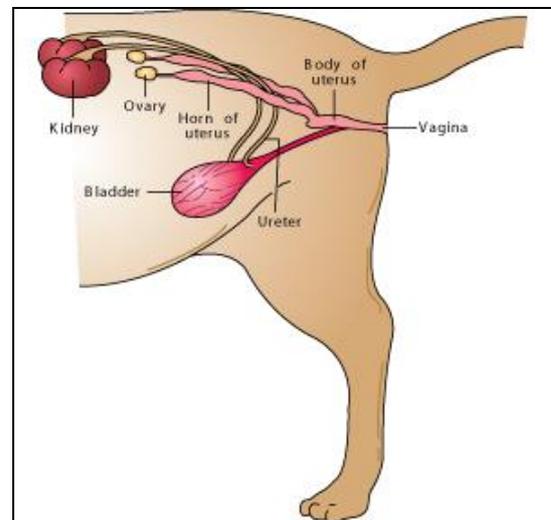
What is meant by ovariectomy or spaying?

Spaying is the common term used to describe the surgical procedure known scientifically as an ovariectomy. In this procedure, the ovaries and uterus are completely removed in order to sterilize a female cat.

Why should I have my cat spayed?

We recommend that all non-breeding cats be sterilized. Here are several health benefits associated with spaying your cat.

- Spaying eliminates the risk of ovarian and uterine cancers.
- Mammary cancer is one of the most common types of cancer diagnosed in intact or un-spayed female cats.
- With every subsequent heat cycle, the risk of developing mammary cancer increases.



Are there other benefits to spaying my cat?

The most obvious benefit is the prevention of unplanned pregnancies. There is no medical or scientific reason for letting your cat have a litter before she is spayed.

Once a cat reaches puberty, usually at around seven months of age, she will have a heat or estrus cycle every two to three weeks, usually in the spring, summer and fall, unless she becomes pregnant. She will be "in heat" or receptive to mating for approximately one week in each cycle. During "heat" she may display unsociable behavior such as loud and persistent crying and frequent rubbing and rolling on the floor. This behavior coupled with her scent, will attract male cats from miles around. Removal of the ovaries will stop her estrus cycles.

When should I have my cat spayed?

We recommend spaying cats at 6 months of age. It is possible to spay your cat if she is pregnant, although there is an increased risk of complications.

What does a spay surgery involve?

This is a major surgical procedure that requires a full general anesthetic. You will need to fast your cat the night prior to surgery. Most cats return home the same day.

The operation is performed through a relatively small incision made most commonly in the midline of the abdomen, just below the umbilicus. Both ovaries are removed along with the entire uterus. The surgical incision will be closed with several layers of sutures. In many cases, skin sutures will be placed, and these will be removed after seven to ten days.

Are complications common with spaying?

In general, complications are rare during spaying of cats. However, as with all anesthetic and surgical procedures, there is always a small risk. The potential complications include:

Anesthetic reaction

It is possible that any individual animal could have an adverse reaction following the administration of a drug or anesthetic. Such cases are impossible to predict, but are extremely rare. Pre-operative blood work is a useful screening test that may detect pre-existing problems which could interfere with the pet's ability to handle the anesthetic drugs.

It is important that you properly fast your cat prior to surgery according to your veterinarian's instructions. In addition, any signs of illness or previous medical conditions should be reported prior to any sedation, anesthesia or surgery.



Internal bleeding

This can occur if a ligature around a blood vessel breaks or slips off after the abdomen has been closed. This is **very** rare, and is more likely to occur if the cat is extremely active. Clinical signs include weakness, pale gums, depression, anorexia or a distended abdomen.

Post-operative infection

This may occur internally or externally around the incision site. In most cases the infection can be controlled with antibiotics. This most commonly occurs when the cat licks the site excessively or is in a damp environment.

Suture Reaction

Although extremely rare, occasionally the body will react to certain types of suture material used during surgery. This results in a draining wound or tract that may appear up to several weeks after the surgery was performed. Often a further operation is required to remove the suture material.

Will spaying have any affect on my cat?

In the vast majority of cats, there are absolutely no adverse affects following spaying. In certain cats, notably the Siamese breed, the hair that grows back over an operation site may be noticeably darker, believed to be due to a difference in the skin temperature. This darker patch may grow out with the following molt as the hair is naturally replaced.

There are many myths and rumours that are not supported by facts or research. Be sure to address any questions or concerns you may have prior to surgery.