

# Park Veterinary Centre

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## CAT NEUTERING – CLIENT INFORMATION SHEET

The current age recommended for neutering both male and female cats is 4-5 months old providing that they are over 2kg in body weight. There are many advantages of neutering in cats:

### MALES

Having a male cat neutered (castrated) involves having both testicles removed under general anaesthetic. Advantages can be a decrease in sexual behaviour, territorial urine marking, less inclination to roam and therefore much less likelihood of being involved in road traffic accidents.

Letting younger male cats outside prior to neutering puts them at much higher risk of being attacked by larger male cats in the neighbourhood, due to their small size and entire status.

Un-neutered males have more of an inclination to be involved in cat fights, the injuries from which have a range of severities and most respond well to symptomatic medical treatment. The problem of most concern is that the cat may contract FIV (feline immunodeficiency virus – the feline equivalent of AIDS) and FeLV (feline leukaemia virus) from other male un-neutered cats. Both of these conditions affect the immune system and have several consequences. They can lead to an early death. FeLV can be vaccinated against in the recommended kitten vaccinations for outdoor cats; there is no vaccination currently against FIV. If an older stray cat is coming in for neutering and vaccinations, we recommend a simple blood test which takes about 30 minutes to run to see if the cat has contracted FIV/FeLV so that the appropriate precautions can be undertaken for the rest of the cat's life.

### FEMALES

There is a strong argument for having a female cat neutered (spayed). Spaying involves removal of both ovaries and the womb (uterus) under general anaesthetic. The most common reason for spaying is to prevent unwanted litters. Cats are induced ovulators, which means that as soon as un-neutered females is mated, an egg is released and she has a very high chance of becoming pregnant.

Recent studies have shown that 8 out of 10 litters are unplanned and many of these are from female cats under 6 months of age. This unfortunately results in approximately 250,000 unwanted cats each year entering rescue centres.

Disadvantages of neutering in both sexes:

Research has not given definitive answers but there is some suggestion that neutering may contribute to obesity and some suggestion that cats may be 'shyer' following neutering at a young age.

**All anaesthetics and surgical procedures carry some risks. If you have any further questions please feel free to ask a member of staff.**