

# Neutering



**CATS PROTECTION**  
**ESSENTIAL GUIDES**



*Cats Protection believes that having your cat neutered is an essential part of responsible cat ownership.*

## What is neutering?

Neutering is a surgical procedure which prevents female cats, known as queens, becoming pregnant and male cats, known as toms, making females pregnant.

- A female cat is spayed (her ovaries and uterus are removed)
- A male cat is castrated (his testes are removed)

Cats Protection recommends the neutering of domestic cats from four months of age, but you should seek advice from your vet for each individual cat.



# Why neuter?

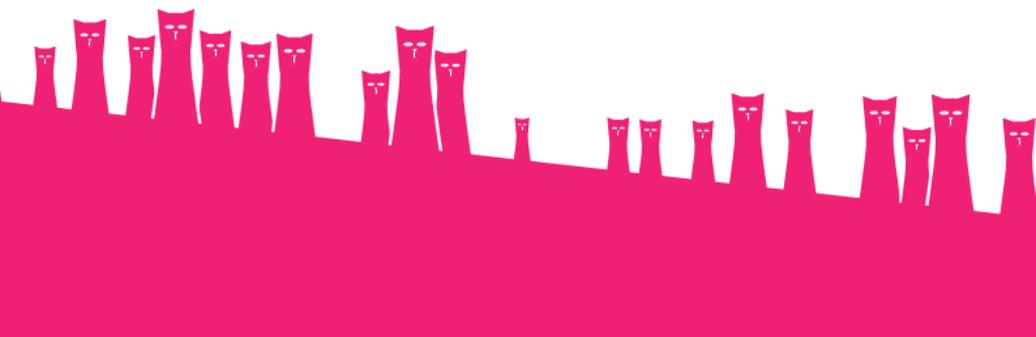
Neutering has many health benefits, as well as helping to reduce the number of unwanted cats in the UK.

## **Neutered male cats are:**

- less likely to roam, reducing the risk of them being run over
- less likely to fight, reducing the risk of them getting injured
- less likely to contract serious diseases such as feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV) or feline leukaemia virus (FeLV) through fighting
- less likely to display territorial behaviour such as spraying
- unable to develop tumours of the testicles

## **Neutered female cats are:**

- unable to get pregnant and have unwanted litters of kittens
- not going to call or wail, as un-neutered queens do when in season
- less likely to contract diseases such as FIV and FeLV spread by bites
- unable to develop cancer of the ovaries or uterus
- less likely to develop mammary cancer – especially if neutered under the age of six months



## The operation

Your cat will have an anaesthetic on the day, so he or she should be given no food prior to the operation – your vet will advise you about this. The operation for both male and female cats is very simple and so you will usually be able to drop your cat off and pick him or her up on the same day.

Female cats will have a small shaved area; this fur will grow back in a couple of weeks. A female cat will also have stitches. If these are not dissolvable, they will be taken out by the vet around ten days after the operation.

Cats usually recover very quickly from the operation. Your vet will advise on the best care for your cat as he or she recovers.

## How much does it cost?

The cost of the operation varies according to what part of the country you live in and the vet you use. The average cost for a male cat is between £20 and £40 and the average cost for a female cat is between £30 and £60. Your vet will be happy to give you a quote before the operation takes place. Cats Protection offers financial assistance to cat owners on benefits or low income to help with the cost of neutering. For more details visit [www.cats.org.uk](http://www.cats.org.uk) or phone 03000 12 12 12.



# Neutering facts

There are many myths that circulate about neutering. To set the record straight, here are the facts:

- there are around 2.5 million stray cats living in the UK
- one un-neutered female cat can be responsible for 20,000 descendents in just five years
- cats can become sexually active from just four months old
- it is not beneficial for a cat to have 'just one litter' before being spayed
- gestation in cats (the length of pregnancy) is only nine weeks, and a female cat can come into season again just six weeks after giving birth
- pregnancy and motherhood are physically very demanding for a cat – repeated pregnancies take their toll
- cats will breed with their brothers and sisters
- a cat can have up to three litters a year with five or six kittens in each litter. That adds up to 18 caring homes for Cats Protection to find each year, just for one cat's kittens!

This leaflet is one of a range provided by  
Cats Protection on issues surrounding cat care.

Cats Protection is the UK's leading feline welfare  
charity and helps more than 193,000 cats and kittens  
each year. We rely entirely on public generosity to  
finance this vital welfare work.

For more information on **adopting a cat,**  
**volunteering for us** or **making a donation,**  
visit **[www.cats.org.uk](http://www.cats.org.uk)**



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