



Blue Springs

# Animal Hospital & Pet Resort

"It's All About Caring"



## Should you declaw your cat?

The decision to declaw your cat is dependant your cat's behavior and the home environment and relationships it will have. Cats can use their claws to scratch and destroy furniture, carpet, drapes, and other household items. Cats may also use their claws in play and defense and can inflict painful scratches on other pets or people. If this is a concern in your situation, your cat can be declawed to prevent these behaviors.

**The best time to declaw a kitten is when he/she reaches approximately 4 pounds. This is usually around 4 months of age. Kittens of this size seem to tolerate and recover from the procedure much more quickly than older pets.** Older cats can be declawed, but they will have to stay in the hospital longer and will take longer to recover.

Surgical removal of the front claws prevents most destructive behavior so front declaw is the standard procedure. Surgical removal of claws on the hind paws is performed by special request. This procedure is reserved for those pets that have particularly fragile family members or other special concerns. **Cats that spend any amount of time outside should not be declawed.**

Kittens less than 6 months old can be declawed on all four feet at the same time for a small additional fee. Older cats will require two separate surgeries and hospitalizations with the second surgery fee the same as the first time.

**For increased patient comfort and a faster recovery, we recommend laser surgery for removal of your pet's claws.** The benefits of laser surgery include: decreased amount of pain, blood vessels and nerve endings sealed off, decreased amount of bleeding, and quicker recovery compared to traditional surgery.

If you have questions about whether or not to declaw your kitten, please call the hospital and we will be happy to explain the procedure and help you decide if it is necessary for your pet.

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