

The Inside Scoop



The Truth About Declawing: A Misunderstood and Painful Procedure

Many people do not understand what takes place when a cat is declawed. They think of it in the same benign vein as having finger nails clipped. What they don't realize is that declawing actually involves more than just removing claws. It involves amputating an entire joint, including bone, ligaments, nerves and tendons from the ends of the cat's toes. It's like having your fingers cut off at the last joint – not just the finger nails. This is because a cat's claws are actually a part of the last bone or distal phalanx in the cat's toe.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals describes the procedure as a form of mutilation that causes pain. The BC SPCA condones the procedure only if done after examining other options with a veterinarian in

circumstances when the animal would be denied a home or face euthanasia. Cats have been observed to favour feet for a couple of months after the surgery. It's also likely that cats experience longer-term, ongoing pain similar to the phantom pain experienced by 60% to 70% of people who have had amputations.

Complications may include serious reaction to anesthetic, hemorrhage, infection caused by bone chips, damage to the radial nerve, lameness and abnormal regrowth of nails resulting in a need for additional surgery. Sometimes nails grow back inside the paw or even grow outward through the top of the foot, resulting in extreme pain. Declawing also causes a gradual weakening of muscles in the leg, shoulder and back.

Behavioral problems may also result. A declawed cat may become distrustful and start to urinate and defecate outside of the litter box in an attempt to keep others

away. As well, personality changes may occur. A cat may become extremely timid or aggressive. Declawed cats are more prone to biting.

Not surprisingly, declawing is now either illegal or performed only under extreme circumstances in twenty-three countries including England, Italy, France, Germany, Sweden, Portugal, Belgium and New Zealand.

Please think twice before declawing your cat. It isn't a minor procedure. Ask yourself if your aim in declawing your friend could be attained in less drastic ways. There is lots of information about cat behavior available in books and on the internet. You can also find more information about declawing and alternatives such as trimming nails or using lightweight vinyl caps called Soft Paws at www.declawing.com/htmls/article.htm.

Submitted by Renea Mohammed

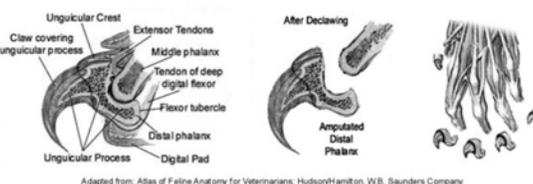
Understanding Declawing (Onychectomy)

The anatomy of the feline claw must be understood before one can appreciate the severity of declawing. The cat's claw is not a nail as is a human fingernail, it is part of the last bone (distal phalanx) in the cat's toe. The cat's claw arises from the unguicular crest and unguicular process in the distal phalanx of the paw (see diagram). Most of the germinal cells that produce the claw are situated in the dorsal aspect of the unguicular crest. This region must be removed completely, or regrowth of a vestigial claw and abscessation results.

The only way to be sure all of the germinal cells are removed is to amputate the entire distal phalanx at the joint.

Contrary to most people's understanding, declawing consists of amputating not just

the claws, but the whole phalanx (up to the joint), including bones, ligaments, and tendons! To remove the claw, the bone, nerve, joint capsule, collateral ligaments, and the extensor and flexor tendons must all be amputated. Thus declawing is not a "simple", single surgery but 10 separate, painful amputations of the third phalanx up to the last joint of each toe. A graphic comparison in human terms would be the cutting off of a person's finger at the last joint of each finger.



Adapted from: Atlas of Feline Anatomy for Veterinarians, Hudson/Hamilton, W.B. Saunders Company

Submitted by Sandi Walker



Kitty Corner



Happy Endings...and New Beginnings



Summer

Folks in a New Westminster neighbourhood contacted us about a black and white cat hiding under a vacant house that was soon to be raised and renovated. Because she was too frightened to approach people, we used tuna and a cat trap to entice her out and catch her.

The veterinarian's exam revealed her to be extremely emaciated, dehydrated, anaemic, and jaundiced. Her prognosis was not promising; however, after she underwent a course of IV fluids and immediately showed an interest in food, we became more optimistic for her recovery. She moved to a foster home where she was fed kitten food for two months to help build her strength and regain her health.

Today Summer is sleek and healthy. Now her only wants are for a permanent indoor home and all the love and attention she can get.

UPDATE...Summer's dream has come true, she has found a new and loving home.



Ahhhhh. My bed. If Mummy and Daddy can work around me, I'll let them share!



Marsh

Marsh was found huddled in a dresser drawer in an apartment from which the tenants had recently been evicted. What should have been a beautiful grey fur coat was sparse and coarse, barely covering his extremely thin body; his scabby, spindly tail was further evidence of near starvation. But his bright spirit hadn't been vanquished, and he bravely held his ground when the much larger, tougher "boys" at the shelter checked him out.

And his fortunes changed quickly when kind people chose him for adoption. Now with love and attention and plenty of nourishing food, he is living happily every after.



Charmin

Everyone at the apartment where Charmin had been hanging out for some time thought that she was someone else's cat. As a result, she was hungry and cold most of the time because she only got small handouts here and there.

Fortunately she was blessed with a very loud and demanding voice. As the weeks went by and her complaining became more strident and urgent, people finally began to take notice. When it was finally determined that she did not have a home, she came to us for help.

Charmin continued to voice her opinions at the shelter. She even joined in on the Christmas carols at Bosley's while she was sitting in her cage waiting for someone to appreciate her talent and take her to a real home.

And that is just what happened! She charmed a woman who had recently lost her own dear old cat. Now Charmin lives in the lap of luxury with another, less opinionated cat, and she has become the official "spokescat" for the household.



Clara

When we receive a phone call from someone who has found a lost animal we ask him or her to take it to our veterinarian where it will be examined and checked for ID, such as a tattoo or a microchip, and hopefully reunited with its people.

When a woman called us about a little calico kitten that had turned up on her

patio we asked her to take her to Alpine Animal Hospital. The exam did not reveal any ID; however it did tell us that this sweet, thin little cat had been a kitten many years ago and was now a frail senior cat who had obviously not had a regular source of food for quite some time.

After some special medical treatment, Clara went to a senior cats' home where she is pampered and loved, and has her cushy bed fluffed daily. Thanks to the kind person who cared enough to call us, this very gentle little old cat will now live out the rest of her days in a safe and loving environment.

Submitted by Doreen Stocks

Royal City Humane Society Garage Sale



The Royal City Humane Society Garage Sale held on May 7th 2005 was a raging



success raising \$2,830.25 help the animals.

Thank you to all the volunteers who so generously donated their time and efforts to make the garage sale the success it was.

Please...



They look cute now, but there are not enough good homes for all the kittens and puppies born each year.



There are never enough homes for all the cats that come to the Royal City Humane Society for help - especially cats over eight years of age, cats who lack social graces, and cats with chronic health problems. These cats usually become permanent wards of the RCHS and require lifetime foster care.

Then there are the cats who need a temporary or short term foster home - pregnant cats, moms with kittens, kittens without moms, cats who have had surgery or an acute illness and need a safe, quiet place to recuperate or cats who require medication or a special diet for a specific period of time.

Whether you enter into long or short term foster RCHS will provide food and supplies and pay for all veterinary care. All we ask is that you provide a safe loving indoor home for our cats. If you can and wish to supply food and litter it will help us to care for another homeless cat.

Because the majority of the cats in our care are rescued from the street we have no way to know what they've been through and how they will react in a new home. Should any problems arise due to temperament or behavior we offer support and assistance and if at any time you do not want to continue to foster, we will remove the cat from your home.

Foster people get first option to adopt a cat in their care.

Although the majority of fostered animals are cats, we do from time to time require foster homes for dogs, rabbits, birds, guinea pigs and other small mammals.

If you are interested in fostering you can contact **Royal City Humane Society at 604-524-6447 or Doreen at 604-525-4930** for more details and a brief interview to determine what type of foster would be most suitable for your home.

Don't Litter!

Please contact us about our low cost spay/neuter program for low income families. PLEASE...help us to help them.



You Know You've Been Doing Rescue Too Long When....

You have a mental list of people you'd like to spay, neuter, or mostly euthanize.

You stopped at a house with a "Free Kittens & Puppies" sign in the yard to have an "educational chat" with the homeowner and your kids had to post your bail.

Running out of paper towels is a household crisis.

Your checks have messages on them like "Subtract Two Testicles For Every Four Feet."

You pray they will someday manufacture Teflon furniture.

You not only allow pets on the couch, guests have to sit on the floor because the cat has "territorial issues."

Your spouse missed the final game of the World Series because the cat wanted to watch his favourite video, "Birds of North America."

You wear white year 'round, not because you are flaunting a fashion law or belong to a religious sect but because it is BLEACHABLE.

The world would never guess from your "doggie baby talk" posts to-lists that in reality you are chairman of the IBM Corporation.

For "relaxation," you went mall hopping

with your girlfriends. Your eyes glazed over when you saw a sign in front of a pet shop, "20% Off All Puppies & Kittens," and you slapped three security guards and the store manager before they got you safely contained in the mall manager's office.

People are still talking about your spay/neuter Christmas cards from last year: "Deck the Halls with Balls of Doggies, woof woof woof woof, woof woof woof woof."

You and your foster dog are both on Rescue Remedy.

You have a hard time wanting to patch the art created by one your foster cats that used your wall to start a sculpture.

When asked by your aunt why you didn't register for china for your wedding you matter of factly stated that you don't need fine china because no one wants to come over because of the five dogs and eight cats anyway.

Spending quality time with your husband means you are at the same adoption centre holding pets that are looking for new homes.

You wonder how many days/weeks/months it will take for the super wonder family who just adopted one of your long-termers to suddenly turn into Dr. Hyde and become your angel and worst nightmare in one weekend.



Did you know that domestic rats make great family pets? Unlike hamsters that can be hostile, dislike being handled, and are nocturnal, domestic rats are sociable, like to be part of their human family, and they stay awake in the daytime! Rats are extremely clever and are easily trained. Many veterinarians recommend rats as the best pets for children as they are very sturdy, are easy to house and maintain,

and they develop attachments to their handlers.

Visit www.ratsincanada.com for all the information on rats you would want to know, and a valuable list of references.

RCHS has a number of male and female rats for adoption or fostering. Please contact us to arrange to see our rat family.

THE TAIL



Mailing Address:
Box 0102,
641 Columbia Street
New Westminster
B.C. V3M 1A8
604 524-6447
www.rchs.bc.ca

Royal City Humane Society

Yes! I would like to make a donation to the RCHS to help animals in need.

One-Time Donation \$ _____

Monthly Donation \$ _____

\$25 \$35 \$50

\$75 \$100 \$200

Other \$ _____

Please accept my annual membership fee of \$10.00

Cheque Enclosed

Sponsor a Spay/Neuter please accept my \$50.00 donation so I can sponsor sterilizing a feral (wild) cat

I Do Not Require A Receipt

Donations may be made on our Website www.rchs.bc.ca by using



Please complete the information below

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____

Prov: _____ Postal Code: _____

Tel: () _____

E-Mail: _____

The Royal City Humane Society is a registered, no-kill animal charity based in New Westminster, BC. As the only charity animal shelter in New Westminster, RCHS campaigns against pet overpopulation and cares for stray, injured and abandoned animals by testing them for disease, sterilizing and tattooing and finding them new homes. RCHS is 100% volunteer run. Funding is obtained through various fund raising activities, memberships and donations, and all funds are spent on the welfare of the animals.



Registered Charity # 89683-2532-RR0001

Theresa Laviolette-Editor

Memorial Donations

Lorraine Seath in memory of Bran and all other stray cats

Wanda Johnson in memory of Kay Helmick

Lynn Heyman in memory of Verna Kerr, Elsie Aitchison, Dorothea Smith

Eileen Kernaghan in memory of Earl Grey

Carole Cameron in memory of her mother, Corol, who loved cats and Miss Judy & Mr. Poppy in particular

Donna Meadwell in memory of Corinne Sam

Heather Brown in memory of Buster Brown

Karen Kaler in memory of Rosie

The following were all in memory of
Carmen Beuhler
Lynn Falk
Linda Cann
Olga Volpe
Colin Smith
Lorrie Williams
Vi Schleppe

Kerrie & Orrie Babiuk
Pat & Gerry Unger, GC Unger & Co., CGA
Dickey, Browning, Ray, Soga, Dunne,
Barristers & Solicitors
Carmen Wiseman & Noel Boulanger

Honorary Donations

Margaret Jackson in honour of Tripoli

Lesley Wood in honour of Kismet's adoption

Tanya Bogulski in honour of her friend, Janet Dirks

Barry Tietjen in lieu of Christmas gifts for his family members- Tietjen, Marsh, Litke & MacNeil

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