

DECLAWING

A smooth, clean coat is essential for a cat's well-being. It is vital for temperature control, for cleanliness, for waterproofing, and for controlling the scent signaling of the feline body. As a result, cats spend a great deal of time daily dealing with their grooming routine. In addition to the typical licking movements, they perform repeated scratching.

These scratching actions are a crucial part of the cleaning routine: getting rid of skin irritations, dislodging dead hairs, and combing out tangles in the fur. Without claws, it is impossible for any cat to efficiently scratch himself. The entire grooming pattern suffers as a result. Even if owners brush and comb daily, there is no way they can replace their cat's sensitivity of the natural scratching response. Any human who has ever suffered from an itch that can't be scratched (or can't reach an itching area) will certainly sympathize with the dilemma of a declawed cat.

Physical Effects

- * a gradual weakening of the muscles of the legs, shoulders, and back
- * impaired balance
- * irrevocably altered posture
- * abnormal walking ability, since declawing makes the cat clubfooted and forces the cat to walk with his weight back on the rear of his pads
- * reduced defensive ability; a declawed cat is left 75% defenseless — cats don't use their teeth for defense, they use their claws

Psychological Effects

- * constantly living in a state of stress, since they're defenseless (which affects their immune system, rendering them more vulnerable to disease)
- * increased tension and nervousness, which often results in them biting sooner and more often than intact cats

"Declawing in cats is a surgical procedure in which the animal's toes are amputated at the last joint. Contrary to popular belief, bone — not just nail — is removed. Declawing may result in permanent lameness, arthritis, and other long-term complications. It is actually illegal in many countries. Great Britain's Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons goes so far as to declare declawing 'unnecessary mutilation.' "

But there is evidence which indicates that declawed cats pee outside the box, bite people and are re-homed/relinquished at higher rates than clawed cats.

Seventy percent (70%) of cats turned into pounds and shelters for behavioral problems are declawed cats.

Summary:

In short, a declawed cat is a crippled, mutilated cat; no excuse can justify the surgery for owner convenience. In some countries (example: England and Germany), owner convenience surgery of this kind on healthy cats is routinely refused by qualified vets. In others (example: United States of America and Canada), it has become increasingly commonplace - i.e., owner convenience - and is referred to as onychectomy (the Greek word meaning "nail cutting out").

Note: In England declawing is illegal. It is regarded as animal abuse. Other countries where declawing is either illegal or is not routinely performed are Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Northern Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Northern Ireland, Norway, Portugal, Scotland, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Wales, and Yugoslavia. The list keeps growing.