

The  
Range Animal Hospital

E6116 U. S. Highway 2  
Ironwood, MI 49938  
906-932-3531  
1-888-380-6319

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Donald C. Martinson DVM

Todd A. Grebner DVM

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Advanced  
Diagnostics, Medicine  
Surgery, Dentistry, &  
Trauma Care  
for  
Large & Small Animals

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# Ovariohysterectomy in Cats

## General Information

Ovariohysterectomy is the medical term for spaying or neutering a female cat. The procedure consists of surgical removal of the ovaries and uterus. If the ovaries are not removed, the bothersome heat periods still occur even though pregnancy is impossible. Surgery is usually performed at 6 to 9 months of age.

Though it is routinely performed, ovariohysterectomy is major abdominal surgery requiring general anesthesia and sterile operating technique.

Prevention of pregnancy and heat periods is the main reason for the surgery, but the procedure is often necessary in treating uterine infections; ovarian or uterine tumors, and some skin hormonal disorders.

## What are the Advantages?

There will be no more heat periods.  
There will be no unwanted kittens.  
Pyometritis, a severe uterine infection will not occur.  
Mammary gland cancer seldom develops in cats spayed before their first heat.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Will it make my cat fat and lazy? -- **No.** Obesity is due to excessive calorie intake. Weight can be controlled with proper feeding and exercise.

Will it change her personality, disposition or intelligence? -- **No.** Cats' personalities do not fully develop until 1 year of age. If there is a personality change in a cat neutered at a young age, it would have occurred without surgery.

Shouldn't my cat have a litter first? -- **No.** There is no advantage in allowing your cat to have a litter of kittens, and there are far too many unwanted kittens

born each year.

## Surgery? I'm scared!

With advances in sterile technique and in anesthesia, veterinary surgery is **extremely safe**, and every precaution before, during and after surgery will be taken. Dr. Martinson, our staff surgeon, has over 20 years of experience in the operating room and has performed this procedure **thousands of times**. There are, however, a few simple procedures you can carry out at home to minimize risks and prevent unnecessary problems.

## Important Considerations Before Surgery:

Good nutrition is very important to reduce surgical stress and aids prompt recovery. If you have not already done so, discuss your cat's diet with the doctor or veterinary technician.

Your cat should be free of intestinal parasites (worms) and all vaccinations should be current before surgery. If you are in doubt, check with your doctor or veterinary technician before surgery.

If your cat is in heat, it is best to delay surgery until her heat period is over. A cat in heat usually requires a bigger incision and has a small additional risk of hemorrhage. A spay should be a routine procedure. Let's keep it that way

If your cat is taking medication or has an existing health problem, inform the doctor or veterinary technician before surgery.

Anesthetics are best given on an empty stomach. Do not feed your cat for 8 hours before surgery. Water may be given up to 1 hour before surgery.

## Important Considerations After Surgery:

Restrict your cat's activity for 7 days after surgery.

Notify the Doctor if Any of the Following Occur:

If there is swelling, redness or drainage at the incision.  
Your cat licks or chews the incision.  
Your cat refuses to eat or seems depressed after the first day home.  
There is a change in your cat's general health.

## Other things you need to know:

Dr. Martinson has developed a technique that requires a **very small incision**. All of the sutures are buried and dissolve after several weeks. As a result most cats spayed at the Range Animal Hospital **do not need to return for suture removal**. We will tell you if your cat is one of the few that does.

Your cat will be admitted between 7:30AM and 9AM the day of her surgery. She will go home the following day between 7:30AM and 5PM, or 9AM and noon if it is Saturday.

I hope this information helps you, and please call 932-3531 or 1-888-380-6319 (toll free) for an appointment or if you have any further questions.