

What's With My Cats Tubby Tummy?

A pet owner is curious about the cause of her healthy cats superfluous stomach skin.

Dear Dr. Plotnick,

Our 10-month-old cat Molly has a lot of excess skin (affectionately known as "Molly's flub") that hangs down from her lower belly. We got her from a rescue shelter when she was 12 weeks old, and she had already been spayed. She is not overweight; she eats only a half a cup of dry cat food every day and gets plenty of exercise. Aside from this hanging skin, she seems perfectly healthy. Do you know why Molly has this flub? Thanks for any help.

MichelleVia email

Dear Reader,

Molly's flub is simply an accumulation of fat. When cats are spayed or neutered, their metabolism slows down, and they are more likely to store fat in their bodies. To account for this, owners of cats that are to be spayed or neutered should be advised to slightly decrease the amount of food their cat consumes. Whether a cat develops this abdominal fat pad really varies from cat to cat. Both of my cats are spayed, and yet my older cat, Crispy, has a much more prominent fat pad than Mittens, my younger cat. I've seen other cats, male and female, spayed and neutered, old and young, that have no fat pad whatsoever. I've even had a few clients ask me if I could perform kitty liposuction and remove this fat pad (a purely cosmetic and probably quite painful procedure which I will not do). Rest assured, this accumulation of fat is completely harmless. In fact, I think it gives cats character.