

## Spay Surgery Start to Finish

**Everything you wanted to know about spaying your cat and more.**

*Stacy Hackett*

You've made an appointment to have your female kitten spayed, but you wonder what she'll go through on the day of surgery. What happens during the procedure? When can she come home? When can she start playing again? Will she be in pain?

Put your mind at ease. Animal welfare organizations including the Humane Society of the United States, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the Veterinary Information Network have answered all your questions, taking you step by step through the surgery and recovery period. For more information, talk to your veterinarian.

**What is spay surgery?**The technical term for spay surgery is ovariectomy (OHE). OHE involves removal of the ovaries, fallopian tubes and uterus.

**When should I have my cat spayed?**

Before her first heat Typically between 4 and 6 months of age

**Do some veterinarians spay sooner than 6 months of age?**Yes this is called early-age spay or pediatric spay. Done at 6 to 8 weeks of age. Performed more frequently at animal shelters before adoption. Helps prevent pet overpopulation.

**What happens during spay surgery?**Surgery takes place in a sterile environment, such as an operating room. Your cat receives general anesthesia. A small incision is made in the cat's abdomen. The ovaries and uterus are removed. Blood vessels are clamped and tied to prevent bleeding. The veterinarian closes the incision with surgical glue or sutures.

**Can my cat come home the same day?**She'll recover from anesthesia in about an hour. Veterinary staff will monitor her for unusual reactions or bleeding. In most cases, she can go home that evening.