

Quick Tips: The Basics of Spaying

Spaying prevents unwanted litters and some problem behaviors. Learn what the surgery involves.

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Female kittens traditionally are spayed at 6 months old, ostensibly before they experience their first heat. Spaying a female cat is called ovariectomy. The cat is anesthetized, and the veterinarian removes her ovaries and uterus. The incision is closed by nonabsorbable stitches, which must be removed approximately a week to 10 days later, or by subcuticular stitches, or sutures placed below the skin that gradually dissolve in the body.

Tubal ligation is a surgical procedure that renders a female cat sterile but does not prevent her from coming into heat and attracting males. The procedure is unpopular for that reason.