



## Say NO to Declawing!

*Many countries and U.S. states have banned or restricted the practice of declawing, recognizing it as inhumane. If you are concerned about your cat's claws, consult with a veterinarian or a professional cat behaviorist to explore alternative solutions that keep your cat happy and healthy without causing unnecessary harm. Below are some of the main reasons not to declaw.*

**Pain and Suffering** Declawing involves the amputation of a cat's claws at the first joint, which is equivalent to amputating a human finger at the last joint. It is an extremely painful procedure that can cause long-term discomfort for the cat. Cats may experience pain during and after surgery, leading to behavioral and physical problems.

**Behavioral Changes** Declawing can lead to significant behavioral changes in cats. Cats use their claws for various natural behaviors, including scratching, stretching, climbing, and self-defense. When these behaviors are compromised due to declawing, cats may develop anxiety, aggression, or other undesirable behaviors as they struggle to adapt. Cats who have been declawed may resort to **biting** much more quickly. They also often **struggle to use the litterbox/avoid using the litterbox** without special soft litter, because normal litter can now be painful to their paws.

**Balance and Mobility Issues** Cats rely on their claws for balance and agility. Declawed cats may experience difficulties with balance, leading to a higher likelihood of falling or injury. They may also have difficulty climbing and jumping, which can impact their overall well-being.

**Long-Term Health Problems** Declawing can lead to long-term health issues such as lameness, arthritis, and chronic pain. Removing a cat's primary means of defense can also make them more vulnerable to outdoor dangers, as they cannot effectively protect themselves.

**Negative Psychological Impact** Declawing can have a negative psychological impact. The physical pain and loss of their natural behaviors can lead to emotional stress and behavioral issues.

**Complications and Risks** The surgical procedure itself carries risks, including infection, bleeding, and complications. In some cases, cats may develop complications or infections that require additional surgeries or treatments.

**Alternatives** There are humane alternatives to declawing that allow cats to express their natural behaviors while protecting your furniture and belongings. These include providing appropriate scratching posts and regular nail trimming as well as nail covers to cover the sharp tips of nails. Please speak with your veterinarian to go over humane options if you are struggling with your cat.