

# Castration of Male Cats

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## Purpose of Procedure

Castration is performed in cats to

- Reduce overpopulation and unwanted cats
- Decrease male aggressiveness, fighting with other tom cats, and roaming behavior
- Lessen the likelihood of cat bite abscesses from fighting with other cats
- Decrease the incidence of undesirable urination behaviors
- Prevent, eliminate, or remove tumors involving the testes or scrotum
- Repair traumatic wounds when surgery may not be able to preserve the scrotum or testes
- Control certain type of hormonal (endocrine) abnormalities



## Description of Technique

Castration, or *orchietomy*, is surgical removal of the testicles. Incisions are made directly over the scrotum. If one or both testicles are located in the abdomen (retained testicle or cryptorchidism), an abdominal exploratory surgery is necessary. Another site where one or both testicles may be retained is under the skin near the last nipple or groin area of the abdomen. In these cases, incisions are made in the skin overlying the testicles.

No skin sutures are used for most routine scrotal castrations in the cat. External skin sutures may or may not be used when the testicles are removed from other locations. Scrotal ablation (removal

of the scrotum and the testes) is necessary in some instances of cancer, trauma, or infection.

## **Preparation of Animal**

Your veterinarian will instruct you to withhold food and sometimes water for a certain period of time, depending on the anesthesia to be used for the surgery.

## **Potential Complications**

Complications following castration are uncommon.

- Excessive licking may occur, and some type of restraint device, such as an Elizabethan collar, is required to prevent trauma to the incision.
- A small amount of blood may be noted at the edges of the scrotal incision.
- Some cats that are castrated because of roaming or behavioral problems have no significant improvement after castration.
- Similarly, the incidence of cat bite abscesses may not decrease noticeably.



## Postoperative/Follow-up Care

It is advisable to avoid granular, clay, or clumping kitty litter for several days, until the scrotal incisions have healed. If an abdominal surgery was done, the cat should be kept quiet for 10-14 days or until the sutures have been removed. If possible, the cat should be kept inside in a clean and dry environment until the incisions have healed. No recheck visits may be needed if external sutures were not used.