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# SAY "NO" TO DECLAWING!

There are many misconceptions and a lack of knowledge behind feline declawing. If you, or someone you know, is considering declawing a cat, please read this handout to learn about why you should say NO to declawing, and the human alternatives that are available.

### WHAT IS DECLAWING?

Your cat's claws are not equivalent to your toenails. By declawing them, you are not simply having their "nail" trimmed back, or even having just their "nail" removed. In fact, cats' claws are closely adhered to a bone.

A declawing procedure is a serious surgery that requires anesthesia and hospitalization, and in this surgery, the last bone of the cats toe is fully amputated. This procedure would be equivalent to cutting off the last knuckle of each finger in a human. The procedure and recovery are extremely painful, even with pain medication on board. With the true description of declawing, it is clear why it's viewed as inhumane, and why it is banned in several cities in the United States.

A cat who is declawed may be more likely to bite, because their primary defense mechanism has been taken away, in turn making them potentially more aggressive. Declawing can also alter the conforms of a cat's foot, leading to back pain similar to what we experience when wearing improper shoes. Removing a cat's claws makes them feel defenseless and can result in a hateful, withdrawn, scared cat. In turn, the constant state of stress can make them more prone to disease.

### ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- Sticky Paws or Double sided tape: Adhesive products applied to furniture or specific surfaces to prevent your cat from inappropriately scratching them.
- Soft Paws: Plastic covers that are applied to a cat's claws so as to prevent them from inappropriately scratching furniture or certain surfaces.
- Scratching Posts: Provide a specific spot for your cats to appropriately scratch, as it is in their nature.
- Feliway: A synthetic feel good pheromone that be sprayed onto objects or surfaces that you don't want your cat to inappropriately scratch.
- Nail Trims: Regularly trimming your cat's nails keeps them shorter, and less sharp. This in turn can help prevent damage to furniture or other areas your cat is inappropriately scratching.