

DECLAWING CATS



**Aurora
Animal
Shelter**



If you are considering declawing your cat, it is vital that you research the procedure. While previously considered a viable solution to nuisance cat behaviors, modern veterinary medicine has moved away from the practice. As stated by the AVMA (American Veterinary Medical Association), the elective procedure for declawing cats is discouraged. In fact, in 2017 the City of Denver banned the procedure. Claws are vital to normal cat behaviors such as self-defense, territory marking and stretching. Scratching is important for cats to be able to sharpen their claws and remove the dead outer layers, as well as to burn energy and express annoyance. The physical procedure of declawing a cat is equivalent to amputation, akin to removing a person's first knuckle. With claws being vital to normal

behavior, the removal of a cat's claws can cause significant behavioral issues. These can range from increased aggression to inappropriate litter box use. The declawing procedure can also increase the likelihood for chronic pain, arthritis or lameness, nerve or tissue damage, abscesses, and/or paw pad atrophy.

Individuals and families interested in owning a cat should discuss the likelihood for the animal to scratch before moving forward with an adoption. For more information regarding scratching check out "Information on Cat Scratching". This handout outlines tips, suggestions and methods to minimize inappropriate scratching, destructiveness and other situations in which cats' inappropriately use their claws.

