



Iowa Veterinary Medical Association

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The Iowa Veterinary Medical Association Executive Board endorses the position of the AVMA, AAHA, AAEP, and other veterinary and humane organizations concerning the age at which cats should be spayed or neutered to be five months of age, or prior to the first estrous cycle.

Several factors support this position:

- The risk for mammary cancer (which is fatal in over 85% of diagnosed cases) in female cats who are spayed before their first estrous cycle is reduced by 91%.*
- Spaying/neutering of felines reduces the number of unwanted cats and kittens surrendered to shelters.
- Female cats and dogs benefit from spaying at five months instead of six months. The IVMA recognizes the scientific data showing that the incidence of mammary carcinomas is reduced in cats that were spayed prior to their first estrous cycle.
- Neutering male cats reduces undesirable behaviors (urine marking, aggressive behavior), along with risk-associated behaviors (roaming, fighting) that can result in serious injuries, diseases, and death. Cats neutered before puberty are less likely to exhibit undesirable behaviors secondary to sex hormones. Reductions of these negative behaviors make it more likely that a cat would remain in one household on a long-term basis, rather than being surrendered to a shelter.

**"Mammary Tumors" Cornell Feline Health Center. Accessed June 2020.*

Practitioners can visit www.felinefixbyfive.org to access articles dedicated to this topic, list their clinic(s) as participants, as well as obtain educational materials for display in their clinic(s).

Amanda Fales-Williams, DVM

IVMA President