

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF FELINE PRACTITIONERS



Claw Friendly

EDUCATIONAL TOOLKIT

Sample Announcement Text

As a designated Cat Friendly Practice[®], we demonstrate a unique ability to treat and handle feline patients gently and with respect. It is our mission to implement the highest standards of care, and stay ahead with offering the best practices in feline medicine.

As we continue to provide you and your cat with the best possible care, *[Practice Name]* is proud to announce we will no longer be offering declawing procedures (onychectomy)!

Feline declawing is an elective and ethically controversial procedure that entails the amputation of a cat's third phalanx [P3], or third 'toe bone.' Recent scientific studies have shown that even when done correctly, and with excellent pain management, declawing can cause lifelong pain and increased behavior problems in cats.

Declawing is *not* medically necessary in most instances, and the vast majority of "undesirable" scratching behaviors can be eradicated through regular claw trimming, meeting cat's environmental needs, and training.

It is our responsibility to aid our valued clients in making an informed medical decision in the best interest of their cats. This includes providing the latest scientific information to cat owners and providing them with accessible and easy-to-implement declawing alternatives.

Scratching is a completely normal and natural feline behavior with an inherent function. The primary reason cats scratch is to maintain the necessary claw motion used in hunting and climbing. Cats also scratch as a means of visual and olfactory (scent) communication, to stretch their body, and remove old nail growth.

Ending elective declawing procedures is a crucial decision and commitment for *[Practice Name]*, and we're here to guide you through decisions regarding your cat's health. Please contact us to discuss your questions and concerns at *[Practice Contact Email or Phone Number]*.

You can also access a number of helpful resources, including educational brochures, flyers, scratching post/pad recommendations, and more at www.catfriendly.com/scratching.

Thank you for your support - we are proud in our decision of putting the health and welfare of your cat first!

ALTERNATIVE TEXT:

You may not know what declawing entails. Don't worry, the team at [Practice Name] are here to answer all your questions and provide the best care for your cat. Please ask us about our new declawing policy and schedule an appointment with us to find out more about normal scratching behaviors and claw trimmings.

The American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP), which has designated [Practice Name] as a Cat Friendly Practice[®], strongly opposes declawing as an elective procedure. In keeping with our cat friendly mission, we are ending all declawing surgeries. Scratching is a normal feline behavior. It allows cats to stretch and release stress, but they can't scratch without claws. Declawing entails the amputation of a cat's third phalanx [P3], or third 'toe bone.' Unlike human nails, cats' claws are attached to the last bone in their toes. A comparison would be cutting off a person's finger at the last joint of each finger.

We have many educational resources about normal scratching behaviors for your cat and you can also find out more information at www.catfriendly.com/scratching. [Practice Name] feels strongly about our position. We are happy to discuss strategies to help you and your cat find solutions to unwanted scratching. Please contact our office at (*practice contact email or phone number*) with your questions and concerns.