



Hello,

Thanks for joining our growing list of participating veterinarians! We are delighted to have another resource for cats and kittens in your community.

This packet includes some of our favorite Feline Fix by Five resources for your veterinary practice. We hope you will find them useful to share in your waitings, or to guide conversations with your clients. If there are any materials you enjoy and would like more of, please let us know! We would be happy to send them along free of charge. Email us anytime at info@unitedspayalliance.org.

More information for Feline Fix by Five, including the latest research and scholarly articles for veterinarians and materials for pet parents, is also available on our website at felinefixbyfive.org.

Feline Fix by Five is a program of Marian's Dream and United Spay Alliance.

Marian's Dream is a foundation committed to helping grassroots organizations working to end pet overpopulation and prevent unwanted litters. Learn more about Marian's Dream at mariansdream.org.

United Spay Alliance (USA) works to promote accessible, affordable, and timely spay/neuter services. USA is working to build a comprehensive nationwide directory of affordable spay/neuter resources. Learn more at unitedspayalliance.org.

Again, thank you for signing up to support Feline Fix by Five and committing to helping more cats and kittens get spayed/neutered before five months of age. We are certain that, combined with other spay/neuter initiatives, this will help to decrease the number of unwanted litters being born, and ensure a healthier outcome for all cats and kittens.

Thanks for all you do,

Esther Mechler
President & Founder
Marian's Dream
United Spay Alliance

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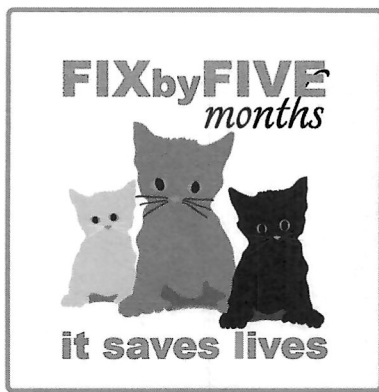
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Feline Fix by Five | A Program of Marian's Dream and United Spay Alliance
207-798-7955 | www.felinefixbyfive.org

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The experts say: “WE FIX FELINES BY FIVE!”

Join us in this campaign to improve the lives and well-being of cats and kittens! We will be listing the veterinarians who promote Fix Felines by Five on our website and welcome your participation. Please sign up for this opportunity to enhance your client base and the welfare of cats in general.

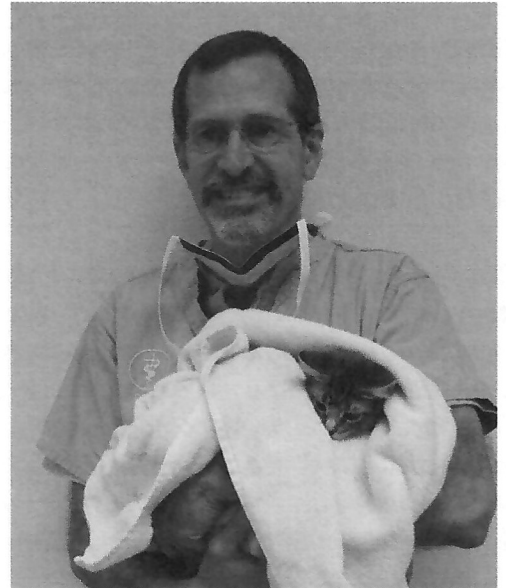
Contact Esther Mechler at esther@mariansdream.org with contact information or meet with us at the Marian's Dream booth.

Here's why they **FIXbyFIVE**:

Richard Speck, DVM

Animal Protective League, Springfield, Illinois: At our spay/neuter clinic we see many pregnant cats under one year of age. Usually their owners intended to spay before pregnancy could happen, and had no idea their cats could come in heat as early as 4-5 months of age. The young pregnant cats we don't see go on to have litters. Pet overpopulation is largely driven by young cats that are eventually spayed, but not soon enough to avoid that first accidental litter. Pushing back the traditional age of spaying by just a few weeks will eliminate these unwanted kittens.

Spaying by 5 months benefits the veterinarian as well. It increases client retention by eliminating bad behaviors that cause owners to give up their cats, and surgeries performed earlier are easier for the veterinarian and easier on the cat. Ideally, surgeries can be timed at the end of a kitten's distemper series. Spaying by 5 months of age is the single most important thing we can all do to get control of pet overpopulation and reduce the euthanasia rate.



Vicki Thayer, DVM, DABVP (feline)

Executive Director and Past President, Winn Feline Foundation

The health and welfare of cats has long been of paramount importance to veterinarians and cat advocates world-wide. Veterinary medicine has focused on cat population control through improved surgical and non-surgical sterilization methods. The age for altering has traditionally been approximately 6 months of age or older. Unfortunately, many female cats will have delivered a litter of kittens by the time they are spayed, adding to the critical numbers of homeless cats in our communities. Studies from the 1990s comparing altering in kittens of 7 weeks of age to those at 7 months of age have shown that the procedure is safe and feasible. Effective, safe protocols have been created for altering earlier than 6 months of age.

Lowering the age of when to spay a female cat by at least one month to 5 months of age is achievable and safe. There are no known contraindications to beginning a "Fix by Five" program for cats. Positive results would be fewer cats that lack homes and loving care.



Fix by Five Months is a program sponsored by Marian's Dream.

To read more or make a donation, visit mariansdream.org.

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter: @marians_dream

The Kitten Seasons

By W. Marvin Mackie, DVM, Consultant



DECEMBER 21

Each day becomes a little longer and it triggers the estrous or "heat." Some queens will exhibit signs of heat as early as late January. By mid-February, queens 5 months or older are likely to be ready for a tom. Once bred, the clock starts:
2 months gestation, then birth
2 months nursing, then weaning
+3 months, kittens mature at a rapid rate
5 months of age (August/Sept)



MARCH 20

Birthing begins with a few litters, then crescendos with activity. Cats are in heat, pregnant, or nursing. Peak time is May, June and July and there is a *shelter kitten tsunami*, considering the weaning time is around 2 months of age.



JUNE 21

Days are getting shorter. Heat is easing with a lot of overlap, and a number of surprised caregivers whose cats have had an "oops" litter are scheduling spays. But the damage is already done. The unplanned litters are now a problem. What is to become of all those kittens?

Moms should be spayed 2 to 3 weeks after weaning (or when the breasts have receded.)



SEPTEMBER 23

The days are now short enough that heat is on seasonal hold. By mid-October heat is down to zero. This year's kittens are on the edge and not likely to be signaled into heat. Even female kittens in February will probably not go into heat this year, but all unspayed females will do so in the upcoming breeding season.

Spay by 5 months - before winter solstice.

HOW TO HELP

If you are on Facebook and Twitter - we are too! Let's spread the word about **FIX by FIVE!** You can find information at mariansdream.org including articles, pictures, charts and studies.

Print out the bookmarks we have on our website and bring to your veterinarian.

Ask your veterinarian if they are already encouraging spay/neuter kittens before five months. If your veterinarian is not convinced, give them materials such as the bookmark or articles from the resources page at mariansdream.org.

Bring brochures to your local library, veterinary office, laundromat, salon and other places where people gather. If you come up with new ideas share them with us, and we will share with everyone!

Talk with friends, family and colleagues about the right age to spay cats (fix felines!)

Send us your ideas and keeping communicating until it is known that kitties need to be 'fixed' between the ages of two and five months -

DONATE NOW

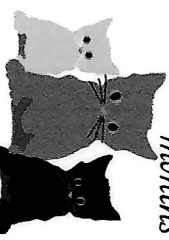
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amazonsmile



You shop. Amazon gives.

FIXbyFIVE
months
it saves lives



Brenda Griffin, DVM, MS, DACVIM

University of Florida, Recipient of the 2000 AVMA Animal Welfare Award

Currently, most private veterinary practices recommend 6-9 months of age as the appropriate timing for spaying/neutering. This is not based not on a scientifically defined optimal age for neutering. This age was probably originally chosen because anesthetic and surgical techniques were less advanced at the time and surgical success was more likely in a larger patient. Despite considerable advances in anesthetic and surgical techniques and published data that illustrate shorter surgical times and lower complications rates for younger patients, these recommendations have persisted.



Veterinarians routinely see kittens for a series of wellness exams and vaccinations between approximately 6 and 16 weeks of age. At the conclusion of the series, they typically advise owners to schedule an appointment in a couple of months for neutering. This gap in care likely contributes to many pets being neutered following puberty and the births of many unintentional litters. Most owned cats with private veterinarians are best served by neutering between 4 and 5 months of age following standard vaccinations. This allows time for development of immunity through vaccination while ensuring they are neutered prior to sexual maturity. Because there is no gap in veterinary care between the vaccine series and the surgical appointment, owner compliance may be improved since the owner establishes a routine of veterinary appointments for their cat during kitten-hood visits.

The value of neutering as a preventive health care measure deserves emphasis. Most notably, when complete ovariohysterectomy or orchiectomy is performed, diseases of the uterus, ovaries, and testes, including cystic endometrial hyperplasia, pyometra, prostatitis and various cancers of the gonads themselves, are eliminated. Additionally, there are reports of significant reduction in the risk of mammary carcinoma in spayed versus intact females. Sexually dimorphic behaviors are also influenced by sterilization. Most notably, spraying in tomcats is generally eliminated and intermale aggression is frequently dramatically reduced. Spayed/neutered cats are also less likely to escape and roam – and they often live longer, too. Cats that are constantly in heat or pregnant and those that spray and fight are not desirable pets. Spaying/neutering kittens is an excellent way to promote pet health and to enhance the human-animal bond.



Philip A. Bushby, DVM, DACVS

Recipient of the AVMA Animal Welfare Award in 2012

A longer healthy life: Recent publications in the veterinary literature have created some doubt about the most appropriate age to spay or neuter pets or even if pets should be spayed or neutered. Sorting through the confusing and often conflicting data on the incidence of certain diseases, cancers and orthopedic conditions is difficult, at best. But one statistic stands out and should make spay neuter decisions easy. Spayed female cats live, on average, 39% longer than intact female cats and neutered male cats live, on average, 62% longer than intact male cats.

There can be no question that sterilization of cats leads to a longer, healthier life. So when should the sterilization occur? With absolutely no evidence contradicting the trend to spay or neuter between 4 and 5 months the best time to perform the surgeries is 2 to 3 weeks after the last kitten vaccination appointment. Surgeries at 4 to 5 months of age are safe, easier and faster than at 6 months old or older. Recoveries are quicker.

FIXbyFIVE it saves lives



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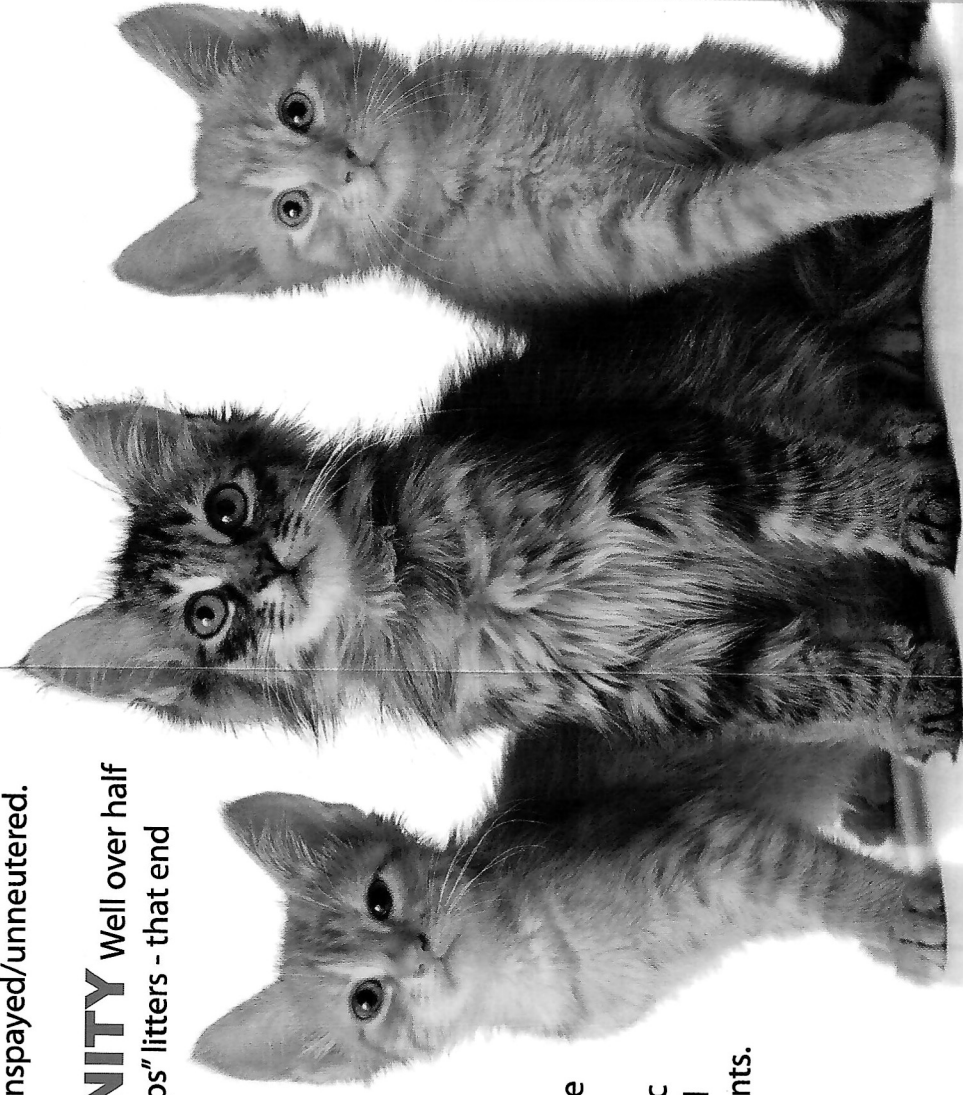
PROVEN BENEFITS:

MEDICAL Kittens spayed before the first heat have a 91% lower risk of developing mammary cancer which takes the lives of an estimated 75,000 cats every year. Spaying also eliminates the risk of pyometria.

BEHAVIORAL The hormones that develop if cats are left unaltered lead to nightly territorial fights, cat mating rituals and roaming. These unwanted behaviors often lead to relinquishment to shelters. Over 80% of cats relinquished to shelters or abandoned are unsplayed/unneutered.

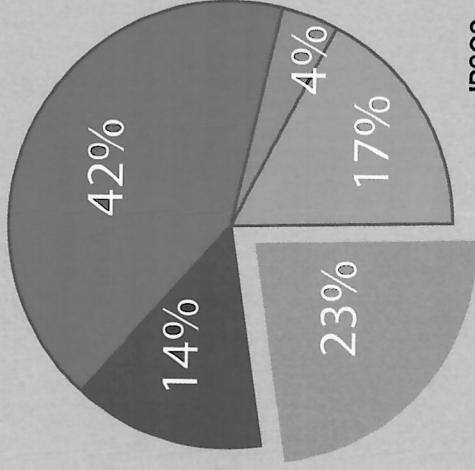
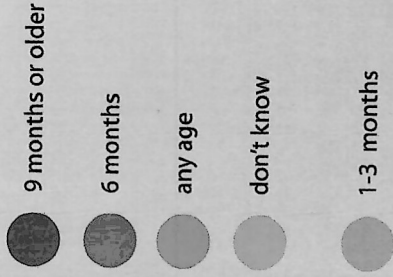
COMMUNITY Well over half the litters are "oops" litters - that end

up in shelters or on the streets. Shelters are inundated with kittens, and older cats who may have found homes are often passed over. Cat complaint calls are at or near the top of the list in public health and animal control departments.



THE ISSUE:

Nearly 75% of people either "do not know," or think that 6 months or later is when a pet should be spay/neutered.



IPSOS study

Fixing cats by five months of age saves lives.

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