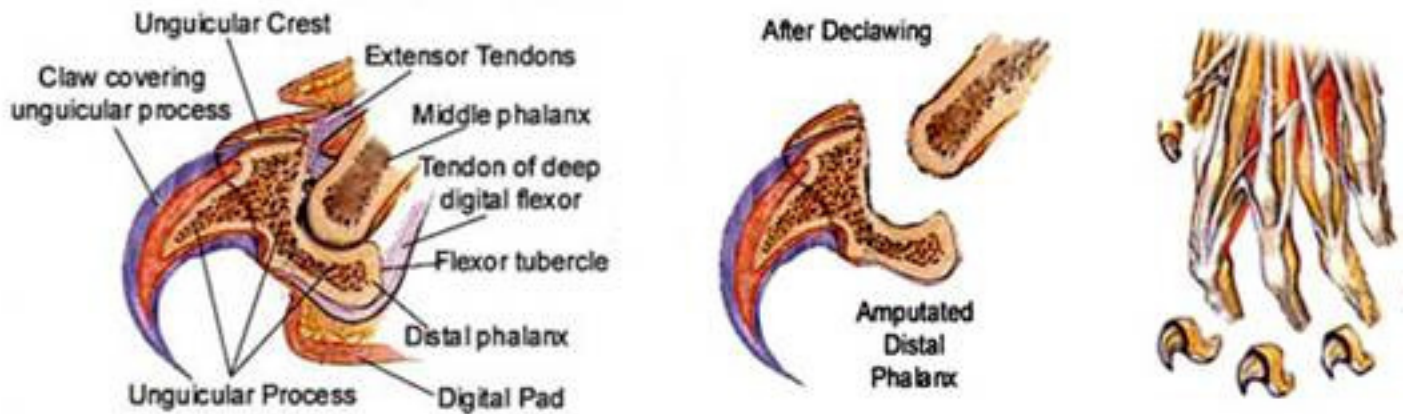


De-Clawing - the rest of the story

If you are considering declawing your cat, please read this. It will only take a few moments, and it will give you valuable information to help you in your decision. This is not a surgery to be taken lightly.

Declawing is something people do for their own convenience, it has NO benefit for the cat whatsoever. The common misconception is that declawing is like a manicure, or that only the nail of the cat is removed. This is not the case, take a look at the following diagram which shows that during the declawing procedure the Distal Phalanx is actually amputated.



Adapted from: Atlas of Feline Anatomy for Veterinarians; Hudson/Hamilton, W.B. Saunders Company

This would be the equivalent of you losing the entire tip of every finger at the first knuckle, yes, that means the cat actually has 10 separate amputations done on her toes (and that is only if the owner decides to just declaw the front paws). In many countries around the world, declawing is banned because it is considered an "inhumane mutilation".

Unlike most animals who walk on the soles of their paws or feet, cats are "digitigrade", which means they walk on their toes. This means that declawed cats can no longer walk or exercise properly because they have lost bones, tendons, and ligaments in their feet. This affects their posture as well as their physical and emotional health. Initial recovery takes a few weeks, but even after the surgical wounds have healed, there are often long term physical and psychological effects such as limping, arthritis, aggressive behavior, and biting. Litter box issues such as, not covering waste or avoiding the litter box all together, are also very common because of the pain and discomfort of digging in the box.

There are plenty of things you can do to deter a cat from scratching in inappropriate places: place a scratching post where they scratch most often; up against a couch etc., place double sided tape on the surface they scratch, purchase "Soft Paws" (they are plastic nail covers that are dull), or use a squirt bottle filled with water. Talk to your veterinarian, they should be able to recommend something other than declawing.

Hopefully, you will think twice before putting your kitty through this inhumane procedure.