Nimble Veterinary Hospital West Ryde · (02) 9129 5551

Desexing your cat: owner guide

Timing, preparation and aftercare for cats.

KEY POINTS

- NSW Pet Registry recommends desexing cats **by 4 months**. A cat that is not desexed by then needs an annual permit ($104 as at July 2026; check the NSW Pet Registry for current fees).
- Kittens can become fertile very young, so it's best not to wait.
- Fast food from the night before; keep your cat indoors the night before. Most cats go home the same day and need **10 to 14 days** of indoor rest.

Getting ready

- **Fasting:** no food from the night before. Water is fine until the morning.
- Keep your cat **indoors the night before** so they can't slip out and eat.
- Bring your cat in a secure carrier.
- Tell us about health conditions, medications, recent illness, or if a female may be in heat or has had a litter.
- Check vaccinations are up to date.
- Set up a quiet, warm recovery space with a litter tray close by.

What happens on the day

- **Admission:** check-in, consent form, questions about the procedure and costs.
- **Pre-anaesthetic check:** a physical exam, and possibly intravenous fluids depending on age and health.
- **Recommended blood test:** an in-house pre-surgical blood test checks how organs such as the kidneys and liver are working and can pick up hidden problems. It's an extra cost; we're happy to go through it with you.
- **Pain relief and sedation**, then **surgery** under general anaesthetic with monitoring throughout.
- **Recovery** in a warm, monitored area, then home, usually the same afternoon. A nurse will go through the discharge instructions and medications and book any recheck.

Aftercare at a glance

- Expect drowsiness and wobbliness at first. Offer a small meal and water in the evening.
- Keep your cat **indoors**: no climbing or jumping for the whole recovery period.
- Keep the Elizabethan collar or recovery suit on at all times, including overnight.
- Keep the wound clean and dry. Give only the pain relief we prescribe; many human medications are toxic to cats.
- Recheck, and skin stitch removal if needed, at about 10 to 14 days. Males stay fertile for a few weeks after castration.
- Watch the weight: desexed cats burn fewer calories. Ask us about portions.

CALL US STRAIGHT AWAY IF YOU NOTICE

- Bleeding or dripping from the wound, an opening wound, or a growing swelling
- Pale gums, laboured breathing, collapse or marked weakness
- Persistent vomiting, or no interest in food or water the day after surgery
- Straining or unable to pass urine (especially male cats)

Before surgery checklist

- [ ] Update NSW Pet Registry details after desexing (we'll give you the paperwork)
- [ ] Cat kept indoors tonight; no food after last meal; water okay until morning
- [ ] Secure carrier ready
- [ ] Vaccinations up to date
- [ ] Told the team about any medications, illness or if my cat may be in heat
- [ ] Recovery space ready: quiet, warm, with a litter tray close by
- [ ] Booked the recheck/discharge appointment

Aftercare checklist (next 10 to 14 days)

- [ ] Cat kept indoors, no climbing or jumping
- [ ] Collar or recovery suit on at all times, including overnight
- [ ] Wound checked at least twice a day (mild redness/swelling early on is normal; heat, discharge or an opening wound is not)
- [ ] Wound kept clean and dry
- [ ] Pain relief given as prescribed
- [ ] Small meal and water offered the evening of surgery
- [ ] Using the litter tray normally
- [ ] Male cats kept away from unspayed females for a few weeks
- [ ] Recheck attended and stitches removed if needed (10 to 14 days)
- [ ] Diet and portions reviewed to prevent weight gain

Contact us

Nimble Vets

Nimble Veterinary Hospital
75 Ryedale Road, West Ryde NSW 2114
Phone: **(02) 9129 5551**
nimblevets.com.au

sash+ Small Animal Specialist Hospital

After hours emergencies
Our closest 24-hour hospital:
SASH Sydney (North Ryde)
1 Richardson Place, North Ryde NSW 2113
Phone: **(02) 9889 0289**
Open 24 hours, 7 days

SASH is a separate, independent hospital and is not affiliated with Nimble Veterinary Hospital. We've listed it as the closest 24-hour emergency hospital available to our patients.

General information only, not a substitute for veterinary advice. Please follow any specific instructions given to you by our team. Full guide: nimblevets.com.au/pet-health/desexing-dogs-cats-rabbits