

Nationwide, a growing number of veterinarians are refusing, for humane reasons, to perform surgery on animals just to meet breed standards. NHES calls for the abolishment of surgically induced breed standards and encourages all dog owners to refrain from having these or any other elective surgery performed on their dogs which cause them unnecessary pain and suffering.



*Fostering a sentiment of kindness to animals*

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*Presented by The National Humane Education Society*



# Unnecessary Surgeries

## Declawing of Cats

**NHES** opposes unnecessary cosmetic surgeries and surgeries performed to correct misbehavior in pets. NHES holds forth that the surgical removal of a feline's claws causes disfigurement as well as suffering.



The recovery from declawing, or onychectomy, can be prolonged and painful — as this surgery is an extreme measure whereby the entire last digit of each toe is amputated. To understand this practice in human terms, this would mean severing off each finger at the last knuckle.

NHES encourages veterinarians to oppose declawing and to educate clients on alternatives to this drastic procedure. NHES also encourages veterinary medical associations to draft policies that oppose declawing because even though there have been advances in the way that cats are declawed, it is still true that for the majority of felines, the pain and expense of this surgical procedure are unnecessary.



If, after trying ALL available alternatives, declawing is chosen, owners must NEVER allow their cats to go outdoors unattended because a declawed cat's ability to climb to safety and defend itself against other animals is greatly diminished. After declawing, some cats may exhibit changes in behavior — most notable are cats that display signs of aggression, including increased biting. Lastly, because this surgery may cause extreme sensitivity and soreness, some declawed cats may cease using the litter box. This information needs to be disclosed and contemplated before any onychectomy surgery.



### **Surgically Induced Breed Standards & Elective Surgery**

NHES opposes surgically induced “breed standards” such as ear cropping and tail docking of dogs. Subjecting animals to pain and suffering to enhance or alter natural characteristics is cruel and absolutely unnecessary.