



Tasmanian  
Cat  
Management  
Project

# Desexing and microchipping your cat

## The fast facts

There are many benefits of having your cat desexed. Desexing:



Stops unwanted litters, reducing the problem and costs of unwanted pets in the community



Reduces undesirable behaviours, such as spraying, marking, fighting, yowling and roaming



Increases your cat's life expectancy



## Having your cat desexed

Desexing your cat is a socially responsible thing to do for a number of reasons. **Uncontrolled cat breeding is a big problem in Tasmania.** If more cats are desexed, there will be fewer unwanted cats and kittens in our community. There are far too many cats already and not enough homes for them all, with Animal Shelters often full to capacity and stretched for resources.

A cat has an average of four kittens per litter and can have two or more litters per year. Each cat must

be fed, wormed, vaccinated and treated for fleas. **Under the Cat Management Act, a cat owner should ensure that their cat is desexed and microchipped by a veterinary surgeon from 6 months of age.** It is also a legal requirement that each cat must be microchipped and desexed before being sold or given away.

There are exemptions to desexing and microchipping rules, for example for certain medical conditions or for registered breeders.

## If you do not have your cat desexed:



Females spray and seek males when 'in season'



Female cats 'in season' often yowl, roll on the floor and are agitated until they are let out



Male cats fight over a female, often resulting in injuries such as abscesses and increased risks of getting Feline AIDS

# Having your cat desexed

## What is involved?

Desexing is the surgical sterilisation of your kitten or cat under a general anaesthetic and only a qualified veterinary surgeon can undertake this procedure. A tattoo will be placed on the inside of your cat's left ear to signify it has been desexed.

Your vet will attend to the post-operative requirements of your cat and normally cats are ready to go home a few hours after the procedure. Your vet will also give you detailed advice on how to properly care for your cat at home in the days following surgery.

Desexing does not affect the personality traits of your cat.

## What is the cost of desexing?

The cost of desexing your cat will vary based on its sex, age and the fees of your selected vet. A desexed cat has a reduced risk of many health issues that can be costly to treat, saving you money in the longer term.

## Discounted desexing

### The National Desexing Network

The National Desexing Network (NDN) is a nationwide referral system for discounted desexing made available to pet owners in financial need. The NDN's goal is to end pet overpopulation by making this service more affordable to those who might not otherwise be in a position to desex their pets. Discount desexing vouchers from NDN are only available to individuals holding a pension, concession or healthcare card showing a CRN number.

Applications should be made online at [www.ndn.org.au](http://www.ndn.org.au). To contact the NDN call 1300 368 992.

### Discount Desexing in July

Each year, during National Desexing Month (July), selected Vet clinics in Tasmania promote desexing and generously offer special deals to encourage the community to desex their pet in July before the spring breeding season. Visit [www.ndn.org.au](http://www.ndn.org.au) for more details.

## When and where to go?

It is strongly recommended that your cat be desexed before it reaches sexual maturity, which can be as early as four months of age. Early-age desexing brings positive behavioural changes and health benefits.

'Early-age desexing' is the desexing of kittens between two to three months of age (about 1kg in weight) and is endorsed by RSPCA Australia. It is practised by most large Australian animal shelters and by an increasing number of veterinarians.

# Having your cat microchipped

## What is a microchip?

A microchip is a small electronic identification tag that is inserted by needle just under the skin between your cat's shoulder blades.

The procedure is quick, safe, easy and side effects are very uncommon. The microchip is implanted permanently, making it much more reliable than a tag on your cat's collar.

## How does it work?

If your cat is ever lost or stolen and taken to a cat management facility, veterinarian or shelter, it will be scanned with a microchip reader to check for a microchip. The microchip contains a unique identification number that is linked to its owner through an online registry.

The registry safely stores your address and contact details so that your cat can be returned to you. All cats that enter a cat management facility must be scanned for microchip identification.

If you move, make sure you update your details on the online registry. Visit [www.petaddress.com.au](http://www.petaddress.com.au) to find out where your cat is registered.

## What is the cost of microchipping?

Microchipping is a low-cost procedure. Contact your local vet clinic to find out more information.

For more information visit: [www.tassiecat.com](http://www.tassiecat.com)

Thanks to Good Cat SA for their great information regarding desexing.

