



Aggression in cats

Aggression in cats has many forms and as many reasons. Declawing is never a solution for aggression, because it does not deal with the cause of the behavior. If you have a playful kitten that attacks your legs as you walk by, will this behavior stop if you declaw the cat? No, because his motivation - predatory behavior- is still there, but the kitten will now need to bite (hard) to get the same reaction he was originally aiming for.

Many people unknowingly send a message to their cat that it is okay to scratch them by playing with a cat with their hands, or wiggling their fingers as an enticement for the cat or kitten to pounce on them. When this behavior is encouraged, it can set up a lifelong aggression problem. For this reason, it is important for humans to provide their feline companions with lots of solo and interactive toys to redirect that energy and prevent aggressive behavior.

If you have a cat that scratches you because it doesn't like to be petted, you can be sure that this behavior will worsen if you declaw her. What your cat has is called "touch sensitivity" and you can either live with it or gradually work to change her behavior with patience, love and treats.

If you have a cat who is acting in an aggressive manner, you must work with a feline behaviorist to determine the cause and help you put together a treatment plan. Many feline aggression problems can be solved using gentle and humane methods, teaching your cat to play with toys, and encouraging a good owner-cat relationship by building positive associations.

Another Alternative:

Soft Paws are rubber sheaths which slip over your cat's nails to protect your furniture without harming your cat. They can be applied at most veterinary clinics or can be purchased in a take-home kit. They last until the end of the nail breaks off, usually two to three months.

Websites:

Here are some web sites that have practical and useful information:

- Cat Tree Plans for the Do-It-Yourselfer: http://www.cattreeplans.com/build_a_cat_tree_p1.php
- Information on Declawing: <http://www.declawing.com/>
- Soft Paws Website: <http://www.softpaws.com/>
- Behavioural Problems: <http://www.aspcbehavior.org/>