Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

What does the package include?
The Catmobile package includes: spay or neuter surgery, a brief exam by our vet, rabies vaccination for cats over 1.5 kg. (3.3 lb., approximately 3 months of age) Feline Distemper (FVRCP) if not already vaccinated and a tattoo.

How much does the package cost?
• Female Cats: $150.00
• Male Cats: $100.00 –The Catmobile doesn’t service male cats with undescended testicles (Cryptorchidism)
• Additional fees:
  - Nail trim: $10.00
  - Flea treatment: $15.00
  - Microchip: $15.00
  - Hernia repair: $80.00 (booked as female for additional time)

Does the Catmobile package include a distemper vaccination?
We highly recommend that your cat receives its first Distemper (FVRCP) at least 48 hours prior to coming to the Catmobile. In the event that your cat has not received its first one, it will be given (at no additional charge) on the Catmobile, but you will be responsible for the required boosters.

If your cat has received its first Distemper at least 3–4 weeks prior to coming to the Catmobile, we may be able to give the first booster (at no additional charge)

Can I just purchase a rabies vaccination?
No. We refer the most people to the various clinics in their area: VETCO at PETCO, Tractor Supply, Walgreens, Rite-Aid, are just a few of the localities that offer vaccines for dogs and cats. Also check your local town hall for any upcoming Rabies clinics (usually held during licensing time in April and May).

What if I don’t want/need the rabies vaccination?
If your cat has a current rabies vaccination, you must present the RABIES CERTIFICATE when you drop the cat off in the morning as proof. Otherwise, by law, we must administer a rabies shot for all cats over 1.5 kg./3.3 lb. (approximately 3 months of age). A medallion is not acceptable as proof.

Does the Catmobile package include microchipping?
It is not included in the package but can be purchased for an additional $15.00 (includes registration). The Catmobile technicians will ask you during morning registration if you would like to add microchipping.
Can I just show up at the Catmobile when it is in my community?
NO! The Catmobile is by appointment only and appointments must be scheduled in advance. The schedule for the following day closes out at 2:00 pm the preceding business day.

How do I make an appointment on the Catmobile?
By calling 978-465-1940 or sending an email request to catmobile@mrfars.org. You can also request an appointment date through our online booking system at www.catmobile.org. Just click “click here to make a reservation.”

When does the Catmobile operate?
We operate Monday - Thursday with occasional Saturday appointments. To view a copy of the current schedule please visit catmobile.org

What if I need to reschedule or cancel my appointment?
Please call 978-465-1940 within 48 hours of your scheduled appointment. Since our schedule is always full, and we usually have a waiting list, we ask that you cancel at least 48 hrs prior to your appointment.

If you are a grant recipient, and cancel the appointment, that grant may not be available for the next booking.

If you are a No-Show-No Call for the second time, we reserve the right to refuse further bookings.

If you are a grant recipient, and do not call or do not show up for the first appointment, that grant and future grants will not be offered.

Does the Catmobile Program accept Spay/Neuter Assistance Program (SNAP) discount certificates?
No, the SNAP program is a partnership of the MSPCA and the Massachusetts Veterinary Medical Association (MVMA) and is valid through participating Massachusetts's veterinary practices only. The Catmobile is already at a discounted rate and not a participating veterinary practice and for those reasons we do not accept SNAP certificates.

What is the best way to get my cat into the cat carrier?
The easiest way to handle a cat that may not want to go into the carrier is to "scruff" the cat or hold it by the back of the neck. Then, while tilting the carrier up a bit on its end, lift the cat up and lower him/her, rear feet first, into the carrier and quickly close the door.
It helps to have two people to do this but it is also the easiest way to create a cat if you are doing it by yourself. Scruffing is the way the mother carries her babies and it does not hurt the cat to be briefly lifted off the ground in this way.

You can even practice lifting by the scruff of the neck before ever putting the cat in the carrier. Scruffing is also useful when giving medication to a cat. Holding it by the scruff of the neck helps to keep its head from turning while you are administering medication.

You can also visit [http://www.wikihow.com/get-a-cat-into-a-pet-carrier](http://www.wikihow.com/get-a-cat-into-a-pet-carrier) for further instruction.

**What happens if the weather prohibits the Catmobile from operating?**

If the Catmobile needs to cancel due to weather, we will post a message on our voice mail by 7am to update you on the status of the Catmobile for that days appointments. To access our voice message please call 978-465-1940. If the Catmobile cancels for the day, we will make every attempt to email you (if we do not have your email address, we will call you). We also send out pre-emptive emails if we are notified of an impending situation.

**What if I arrive for my scheduled appointment and find out that my cat has already been spayed or neutered?**

If during the initial exam by our vet it is easily determined that your cat has already been spayed or neutered, there will be no charge for the appointment. (If a rabies vaccination is administered during this time there will be a $15 charge. You are also still welcome to have you cat microchipped for an additional $20)

If after your cat has been anesthetized, it is determined that he/she has already been spayed or neutered, you will be responsible for full payment.

**Will my cat receive pain medication?**

Yes. Pain medication is administered on the Catmobile only.

**Will my cat receive antibiotics?**

You will be advised at morning registration if your cat may need antibiotics. Our vet determines during surgery who will need antibiotics. This is an additional $20 cost and needs to be brought back with you during pick-up just in case.

**Can I get other services for my cat on the Catmobile?**

No, we are not a full-service vet clinic.
**Do I bring my cat back to the Catmobile for follow-up care?**
No. The only services we provide are those which we perform on the Catmobile that day. We do not provide follow-up care. In the unlikely event that any complications arise when the cat goes home, he/she would have to be taken to the customer’s own vet.

**Will I need to come back to have the stitches removed?**
No. Our vet uses dissolvable stitches and surgical glue to close the spay (female) incision so there is no need to return to have any stitches removed. (It can take up to 4 weeks for stitches to fully dissolve.) Neuters (male) do not require sutures.

**Is my cat too old to be spayed/neutered on the Catmobile?**
Our vet highly recommends preoperative blood work for both male and female cats 2-3 years old. The blood work recommended is a Chem 25 and a CBC and can be performed at your local vet office or by another clinic offering this service. This is not a service we offer on the Catmobile.

The results should be faxed to our office for review. Once our vet signs off on the blood work, we will contact you to schedule an appointment. If you do not want to do the blood work, you will have the option of signing a waiver to have the procedure performed anyway.

We do not spay/neuter cats over the age of three but can provide you with a referral of a place who can assist you.

**How old does the cat have to be in order to be spayed or neutered?**
The cat must weigh at least 2 lb. to undergo the procedure. Most cats hit that weight at 8 – 12 weeks.

**What if my cat is in heat?**
We are still able to spay her.

**What if my cat is pregnant?**
We will still spay her. (The fetuses do not survive the procedure.)

**Do I have to bring a stool sample?**
No.

**Do you do preoperative blood work?**
No.

**Will my cat be wearing a protective collar after the procedure?**
No. Existing flea collars and/or decorative collars should be removed prior to your appointment.
Do you test for FIV (Feline Immunodeficiency Virus) and/or FeLV (Feline Leukemia)?
No.

Is it safe?
It's a surgical procedure, and as with any surgery, there are always risks. We have a licensed veterinarian who performs the actual procedures, and there are also two vet techs on the Catmobile, so the kitties are very well monitored.

How often is the Catmobile cleaned?
Every night.

What about the surgical instruments and materials?
The scalpels use new blades in sterilized handles. We use new needles and the very highest quality, most expensive suture material.

Is it a vet who performs the procedures?
Yes. Our vet is Dr. Deborah Brady. She is licensed in MA, is a graduate of Tufts Veterinary School, and prior to joining the Catmobile had worked at the MSPCA.

Do you do all these things on the same day?
Yes.

How do I pay for my appointment?

**IMPORTANT CHANGE**

As of February 1st, 2020, all appointments must be prepaid with a credit/debit card by calling the office.

After receiving email notification of your pending reservation, please call the office to make the payment with a credit/debit card to secure your appointment.

Your reservation will not be confirmed until payment is received.

If you do not make the payment within 3 business days after your email notification, then your reservation will be cancelled.

The office is open Monday–Friday 10:00AM–2:00PM (not including holidays) and can be reached by phone at 978-465-1940.
I can’t afford the full cost of the package– can you help me?
Occasionally, we may have some grant funding available to help further reduce the cost if needed. Please inquire when booking your appointment.

Why do I have to bring the cat in a carrier? What kind of carrier?
It’s a safety protocol to protect you and your cat as well as our staff. For safety reasons, the cat MUST arrive at the appointment in a hard, plastic carrier. Please NOTE: Cats arriving in any other type of carrier (cloth, vinyl, cardboard) will not be admitted for surgery and you will be asked to reschedule.

What time do I pick the cat up?
During check-in the Catmobile staff will give you a specific pick-up time which will be dependent upon how many cats we have scheduled that day. You must pick up your kitty at your assigned time.

Can I stay with my cat on the Catmobile?
No. There isn’t room.

Do I have to live in Massachusetts (or the town where the Catmobile will be that day) in order to use the Catmobile program?
No. There is no residency requirement.

My cat has tested positive for FIV and/or FeLV. Will you still spay/neuter on the Catmobile?
Yes.

Do you spay/neuter feral cats on the Catmobile?
Yes. They need to be brought to the Catmobile in a covered trap. All feral appointments must be booked by calling the office. The fee for feral cats is $120.00 and includes the spay/neuter, rabies vaccine, Distemper vaccine, Revolution flea treatment, ear tip and tattoo.