



Euthanasia

Having to consider euthanasia for our pets is one of the most difficult decisions we can make in our lifetime. Our pets play such a vital role in our family and teach us so much about unconditional love. Sometimes the decision to euthanize your pet can be one of the most selfless gifts you can give your best friend.

What is Euthanasia?

Euthanasia is the induction of a painless death. The euthanasia procedure is stress-free for your pet. Sometimes we provide your pet with a sedative before proceeding with the euthanasia. The injection used for euthanasia is a very concentrated general anaesthetic. This means your pet will feel relaxation and peace and feel as though they are going to sleep. Once injected, the onset of death is very rapid. It only takes a matter of seconds. We will ensure to talk you through the whole process. We want to ensure you and your pet feel as comfortable as possible.

Should I euthanize my pet?

We are able to answer this question extensively in a veterinary consultation. Our caring veterinary team are able to go through your pet's condition, treatment options and prognosis with you. We understand that as this is such an emotional time, sometimes you like to feel prepared in your own home before making the first step to speak with us. We have listed some considerations below you are able to use as a guide

Consider the below:

- Does my pet have a malignancy, terminal condition or serious injury?
- Is my pet showing signs of discomfort?
- Is my pet still playful? Could my pet be uncomfortable?
- Is my pet still eating and drinking?
- What is the present quality of my pet's life?
- Is my pet able to go to the toilet unaided or is it incontinent?
- Has my pet stopped grooming itself or taking care of itself?

- Has my pet stopped moving? This may be caused by pain.
- Does my pet seem lethargic and withdrawn?
- Is my pet in pain (crying if touched)? Some pets only show pain by dilating their pupils so it can be hard to tell. We will be able to advise if we think your pet is in pain.
- Are any other treatment options available for its condition?
- Does my pet feel that I am withdrawing from it because of its possible condition?
- Should I discuss payment prior to my appointment? Will I feel too emotional to discuss this on the day?

Sometimes it is possible to delay euthanasia for a day without causing suffering and the euthanasia is planned. We are able to provide pain relief for your pet during this time. This is a time for you and others who love your pet, to say 'goodbye' and pampering your pet with treats and love. If your pet is suffering, or is already under anaesthetic, they will not enjoy having their misery prolonged. It is important to put the welfare of your pet above anything else, it is the most responsible decision you can make as a pet owner.

Should I stay to the end?

This is a personal decision. Do what feels right for you and your pet. You are able to discuss this with one of our veterinarians. The euthanasia process for some animals is slightly different and can cause more distress to owners. We recommend you do not attend

the euthanasia of pocket pets (rabbits and guinea pigs) and some aquatic animals for this reason.

We recommend ensuring that you have emotional support from friends and family when deciding if you want to be present. We make the procedure as peaceful and comfortable as possible for you and your pet. For owners who do not feel they can be present, we ensure we utilize an additional nurse who will comfort your pet and give them treats during the procedure.

Sometimes deciding to stay can be a peaceful experience and you may feel better about making this decision.

Remember there is no shame in showing your emotions at this sad time - it is a natural reaction. We understand what you are going through.

After the decision:

Each of us grieves differently. It is important to take care of yourself and understand that you have experienced the loss of a family member and you will need time to grieve.

One of our clients who is a psychologist has a special interest in animal grief counselling. We work along side her at Howling at The Moon to learn ways we can make things easier for you and your pets. She offers grief counselling after the loss of your pet. You can find more information here:

<http://cardinalservices.biz/howlingatthemoon/index.php/counselling/>