

COMPASSIONATE END OF LIFE: WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Preparing yourself, your family, and your pet

Once you have made the decision, taking the steps to prepare can help ease the process. For your pet, it can be comforting to bring their favorite toy or bed so they have a familiar smell from home. Many also bring along a special treat. The most important thing is to help your pet feel calm and comforted.

For you and your family, it's best to make time for everyone to say their final goodbyes, either before or after the euthanasia. You may consider a family gathering with your pet to celebrate their life before the appointment.

Being with your pet during the euthanasia is a very personal decision and you should decide what's best for you. You are also the best person to decide if children should join. Young children may not fully understand the concept of death and their confusion may make the experience more stressful. If your child is older, explain what's happening in advance to prepare them if you'd like them to attend.

What does the process look like?

When you first arrive, your veterinarian will explain the procedure and ask if there are any questions. The actual procedure is simple and peaceful, done at a pace for your pet's comfort. First, a sedation injection will be given to ensure your pet is relaxed. Once you are ready, a final euthanasia injection is given. It's virtually painless and works rapidly and peacefully. You may observe involuntary muscle contractions or hear deep breathes, but these are physical reflexes and don't mean your pet is in pain or is suffering.

After your pet has passed on, you may continue to spend time with them to have your final goodbyes. The doctor will excuse themselves for a few minutes to give you time alone.

What happens after?

At THRIVE, you have three options once your pet passes. You can take them for a home burial (be sure to check local, county or state ordinances to make sure this is legal) or choose for them to be cremated. If you choose cremation, there are two options available.

Private Cremation - A private cremation is when only one pet is present during the cremation process. Your pet will be identified with a stainless-steel ID tag and their remains to be returned to you.

Communal Cremation - A communal cremation is when more than one pet is present. Your pet's remains will not be returned, but you do have the option of a clay paw print to memorialize your pet.

Memorial

Once your pet passes, there are many ways to celebrate their life. For some, they may wish to hold a formal or informal funeral service. Others bury their pet or their ashes and place a marker in a special location. Those who have a cremation may also request their pet's ashes to be placed in an urn and keep at home. Many mark the passing of a beloved pet with a simple framed photo. Whatever you choose is right for you and is the best thing to do.

WHEN TO KNOW IT'S TIME TO CONSIDER EUTHANASIA



- Cannot get up and move around, or struggles to move around
- Has stopped eating, or must be force fed
- Is experiencing chronic pain that cannot be controlled with medication
- Has chronic labored breathing or coughing

- Is incontinent to the point they soil themselves frequently
- Has lost interest in most of their favorite activities, like playing with toys and other pets, going on walks, eating treats and/or petting from family



CARLYN SAYS:

Talking open and honestly with your children about your pet's end of life is important.



THRIVE RECOMMENDS:

Our clinical staff will be able to help you determine the best manner in which to create the most comfort for your pet during this stage of life.