



## Euthanasia: arriving at the decision



We understand that euthanasia of your pet will never be an easy decision to have to make, but discussing your concerns with your veterinary surgeon may make this choice a little easier.

Living with a pet with a chronic illness can be emotionally draining and often the commitment to their care is substantial. Not everyone is able to cope or has the time to be able to provide this care. In these circumstances it may be better for both pet and owner to opt for euthanasia.

Unfortunately very few animals pass away at home in their sleep. Most will reach a point when their quality of life is unsatisfactory and a decision for euthanasia has to be made.

You know your pet better than anyone, so try to think about how they cope at home on a daily basis, their quality of life and whether they are still able to enjoy life.

### **The procedure of euthanasia**

If you reach the decision that it would be better to put your pet to sleep you will need to make an appointment at the surgery –it is best to let the receptionist know the reason you are coming in, even if you have not reached the final decision and just want to discuss the situation with your veterinary surgeon. The receptionist will then try to pick a quieter time of day for your appointment so there are fewer people around at this emotional time. In some circumstances we can provide a home visit service, if you would prefer the procedure to be carried out at home. If you do choose this option there is a form the receptionist will need to complete over the phone – we understand that this will be an upsetting time, but this will enable the visit to run as smoothly as possible.

Once the decision for euthanasia has been made the veterinary surgeon will ask you to sign a form of consent – this is a legal document which has to be signed to enable us to carry out the procedure.

A patch of hair will be clipped off one or both of your pets fore legs to enable the vet to visualise the vein, the fore leg is the most common place to administer the intravenous injection, there are other ways of administering the injection and your vet will discuss these if necessary.

A nurse will hold your pet during the procedure and if you wish to stay with your pet you will be encouraged to stroke, talk to and comfort them throughout the procedure. Try not to feel guilty if you feel unable to stay with your pet – not everyone chooses to do so. If you choose not to be

present at the time, if you wish, you will have the chance to see your pet after the procedure has been carried out.

The injection will then be administered and your pet will drift off into a deep sleep much like anaesthesia until the heart stops – just depending on your pet's condition, this could be very quick or take a few minutes. During the procedure it is possible your pet may vocalise, take deep breaths and afterwards, as the muscles relax, they can twitch and also may urinate/defecate – they will not be aware of this and will not be in any pain.

### **Cremation or home burial?**

There are several options available:

**Communal cremation** - Your pet will be cremated along with other pets. Taken ash is placed into a casket and stored in a columbarium situated in the garden of remembrance at CPC Companion Animal Cremation Services

**Individual cremation** – Your pet would be cremated individually and their ashes returned in your choice of casket:

**Home burial** – If you wish you can bury your pet at home. There are some guidelines that should be followed - see our home burial leaflet for more information.



Sleeping Cat Casket



Paw Print Urn



Beech Casket



Scatter Pouch

### **Cost of procedures**

Please ask our reception team for an estimate of cost of any of the above.

### **Grieving**

The loss of a pet can have significant impact on you and your family. Companion animals give us a type of support, love and loyalty that can be hard to find elsewhere. Losing a family pet can be one of the most difficult times of your life.

All of us experience a wide range of emotional and physical states: shock, sorrow, anger, fatigue, guilt, insomnia, loss of appetite and loneliness. Others may feel simply empty. All of these things are normal. What is important is that you allow yourself plenty of time to grieve as much or as little as you need and for as long as you need to. Talk with others and share your memories. Seek support from family, friends or maybe a pet bereavement councillor. Finally the day will come when thoughts of your beloved pet will only bring you smiles and warmth.

CPC Companion Animal Cremation Services Bereavement Service 01763 207700