

Things to Remember

Making this decision for your pet will involve others who have been in your pet's life such as family members, friends, and other pets. Understanding everyone's emotional connection to the relationship shared with the pet will aid in guiding you before, during, and after the euthanasia.

With everyone having their own relationship with the pet, it's important to know everyone will have their own viewpoints regarding euthanasia. As a caregiver of the pet, managing all of these viewpoints can become overwhelming and add to the anxiety of the end-of-life decisions. However, it's important to make sure everyone that has been involved in the pet's life has a voice. It's also important to give everyone the opportunity to say their good-byes to the pet. Consider building in rituals and incorporating special items during this final end-of-life walk with the pet to create a truly meaningful and heartfelt good-bye.

The grief journey will be unique to each participant as each one remembers their pet friend who has died a "good and fortunate death."



"You will be sad, I understand. Don't let your grief then stay your hand. For this day, more than all the rest, your love for me must stand the test. I know in time that you will see the kindness that you did for me. Although my tail its last has waved, from pain and suffering I've been saved."
-Unknown.



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*The Emotions of
Euthanasia*

Loving unconditionally





The word euthanasia comes to us from the Greek word meaning, “good or fortunate death.” However, when you choose to euthanize a pet, this will certainly not feel anything like “good” or “fortunate.” The emotions will be those of conflicted feelings. The procedure may be done to end the suffering of an ill pet, but the grief associated with this loss will be unbearable.

What Should I Do

If you are making the decision to euthanize, your veterinarian can be a medical guide for you at this time. More than likely there will be quality of life discussions, financial discussions, and every other element of end-of-life care factors that will need to be a part of the thought process. There will be another part of this decision you should also consider, you are the pet parent and you know your pet better than anyone does. As the guardian of this pet, you are intuitively aware of your pet’s emotions, feelings, and communicative nature, all points of consideration during this emotional decision-making time.

If you have already chosen to have your pet euthanized, trust, and accept you have made the right decision with the information you have at this time.

Making Sense of My Emotions

While it may seem absolutely unbearable, having personal time with your pet before and during the euthanasia procedure will give your heart the peace of mind in knowing your beloved friend knew you were with them the whole time. Pets are intuitive and will certainly feel your presence and love.

We become deeply connected with our pets and this time together at the end will not be any different. It is important to work through all of your emotions surrounding the euthanasia. Not only the emotions of euthanizing a pet but also the informational aspect of this process as well. Some people feel it important to consult with various sources to gain more information about euthanasia. Other sources might be:

- A pet hospice group to assist with the pain management care at home for the pet
- Friends who understand
- Counselors specializing in end-of-life pet care
- Prayer groups
- Ministers
- And, for some, reaching out to another spiritual dimension with the use of animal communicators



Managing the Guilt

The feeling of guilt will also be present. Guilt in the fact you are faced with this decision, “playing God” as some view it, along with questioning the timing of the procedure. As a pet parent, knowing your pet is suffering, whether physically or mentally, will be the part of the reflection you will do as you make the decision on euthanasia as well as letting love be a part in your decision-making process. As you prepare yourself in making this decision, establish parameters to look to in deciding when the time is right for you, such as:

- When my pet stops enjoying treats
- When my pet stops eating
- When he can no longer find the litter box
- When she can no longer find the door

These boundaries have to be right for you and your pet. Ask a pet-loving friend or family member to be your companion at this time and to assist you through this emotional journey. When you have found yourself in the place of considering euthanasia, your grief journey has already begun. Be kind to yourself, find the support you need during this time, and allow yourself the time to make the decisions best for YOUR heart.