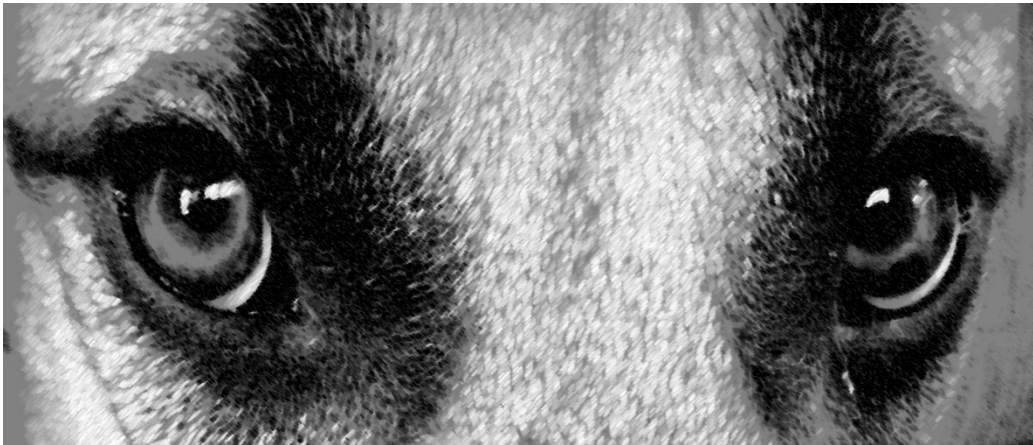


EUTHANASIA



Dealing with the loss of a companion.

What does Quality of Life mean?

Evaluating the **Quality of Life** of your pet is important when considering whether or not euthanasia is the best option. It can be difficult to make this decision, but if he or she is demonstrating some of the symptoms below it is time to speak with your veterinarian about the options for you and your pet.

No longer eating or drinking

Difficulty walking

Pacing or general discomfort

Lack of energy

Lack of interest in toys or walks

How do you determine Quality of Life?

Your veterinarian could suggest different types of tests such as radiographs or blood work to determine your pet's quality of life. After determining your pet's quality of life your veterinarian may recommend medication to control pain and anxiety, or hospitalization to treat an underlying illness. If your veterinarian believes that none of these treatments will be effective, it is time to consider euthanasia as an option. This decision is made between you and your veterinarian.

Read on for answers to the most common questions surrounding euthanasia, as well as important decision-making tools.

MAKING A DECISION

Should I be present for the euthanasia?

Every relationship between a human and their pet is different and unique. Make this decision based on whether or not you feel comfortable with the situation and always remember that your pet will understand if you are unable to be present during the process.



What if I have financial restrictions?

Always speak with your veterinarian about what options are available.

Ask if the clinic has payment plans

Ask about medical credit cards

What does my pet feel?

When chosen, euthanasia is the most humane option for your pet. Usually, the injection is given using one of the veins in your pet's leg; the prick of the needle is all that your pet will feel. Afterwards, your pet calmly falls asleep while the drug enters their body. He/she does not feel anything, and you can assure yourself that your pet is resting peacefully.

What do I do after losing a pet?

If you have lost a pet, consider the following options to help with the loss of your companion:

Share your thoughts and feelings with friends and family.

Consider support groups in your area.

How do I know I'm making the right choice?

Take all the time you need to decide if euthanasia is the best option.

Remember that this decision should be made in the best interest of your pet.

Feelings of sadness or guilt are normal, but you must remember that your pet is also suffering.

Always speak with your veterinarian before making a decision.

Deciding to euthanize your pet is never an easy decision, but it is important to keep your pet's best interest in mind.

Documents were developed by Jessica Hammer, as part of her thesis requirement for Barrett, the Honor's College at ASU, with support from mentoring veterinarians.