



YOUR INFORMATION PACK

A Compassionate Guide for Pet Euthanasia

When is it the right time to say goodbye to my pet?

As pet owners, we cherish so many memories with our beloved pets, filled with joy and companionship, however as they begin to age or face debilitating illnesses which may have a big impact on their quality of life, it could be time to assess what the best option is for your pet and potentially make some difficult choices.

A vet will always be happy to have a discussion with you about different options and will support you through the process. Medications and treatments can be used to help relieve pain, however, if these do not work your vet may have a discussion with you about euthanasia and your pet's quality of life.



At Aldgate Vets, we understand the emotional weight of this decision and are committed to providing compassionate support for both pets and families during this difficult time. We have put together a guide so you can understand what to consider when your pet is considered for euthanasia and the different support available should you need it.

Assess your pet's quality of life

It is important to look at your pet's quality of life and prioritise their welfare. It can be helpful to look at things from your pet's point of view. Consider making a list of some of your pet's favourite activities, it can help by seeing how many of these activities they still do compared to 3 months ago, 6 months ago and a year ago to see if their behaviors have changed





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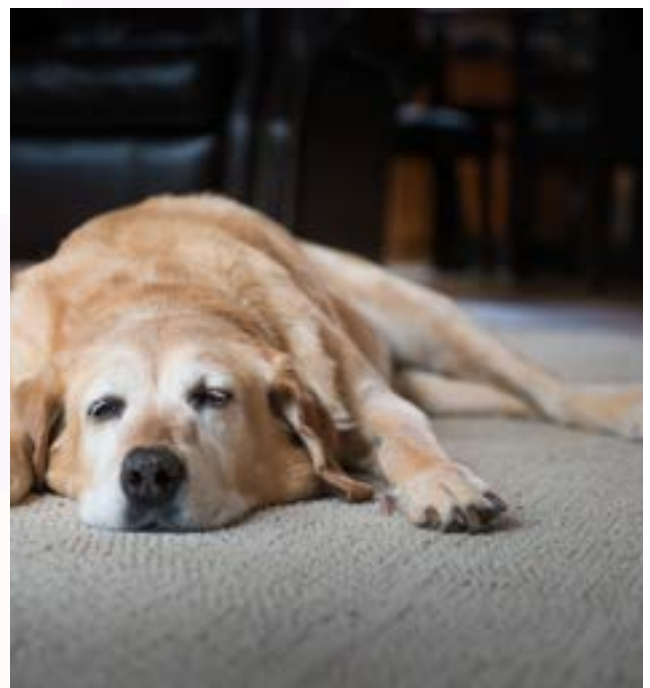
However it's important to note that your pet can still be happy and have a good quality of life even if they cannot run around. For example, you should look at how they are coping and to consider if they are comfortable and most importantly, not in pain. There are questionnaires available to aid the decision and can help to physically lay out how your pet's quality of life is.

Signs your pet is in pain

Animals can be very skilled in masking their pain, which makes it difficult for us to see pain. If you think your pet may be in pain, start to look for subtle changes in their behavior and eating habits that could be signaling pain. We've listed some things to look for out for below:

- 1.Changes in behaviour: such as a decrease in activity levels, or they could be the complete opposite and become more restless. Pets can also be known to hide, and seek isolation when they are experiencing pain.
- 2.Changes in eating habits: they may reduce their normal food intake or refuse to eat completely
- 3.Changes in posture: they may have more difficulty in movement they previously found simple, like getting up or lying down
- 4.Changes in grooming: if they are excessively grooming (licking and chewing) in certain places, it could be an attempt to soothe pain

These are only a few things to look out for in your pet. If you have any immediate concerns, please get in touch with your vet to arrange a consultation.



How to prepare to say goodbye to your pet

The thought of putting your pet to sleep is understandably upsetting and a hard decision to make. Your vet will talk you through the process and tell you what to expect.



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It is often good to decide beforehand who will be present for the euthanasia and if you want children attend. This allows for family members to say goodbye before the appointment. You will have your own consult room where you can have some time with your pet.

Help and support for pet bereavement

It is common to feel guilty about deciding to put our pets to sleep and choosing the right time to do this. You are not on your own and these feelings are normal. Talking to your family and friends can help as these are people who may see your pet often and they may also notice changes. Seeking veterinary advice to help answer any questions about the euthanasia itself and what to expect can be comforting.

There are lots of other support groups and helplines that can also help you through this difficult time and they provide a safe space to talk about the grief you may experience and pet loss to both professionals and people going through similar situations.

Some good sites and phone numbers include:

- Blue cross charity support line, open from 8.30am-8.30pm every day. Call 0800 096 6606
- The Ralph site, that has advice on how to manage grief and they also have Facebook page to talk to people experience similar situations. Visit <https://www.theralphsite.com>



- Cats Protection: Paw Listen and Grief Support, open from Mon-Fri 9am-5pm (excluding bank holidays). Call 0800 0249494
- Pet Bereavement Support Service (PBSS) that you can contact via phone, email or webchat
- Some sources that go through how to approach euthanasia to children
 - Talking to children about pet euthanasia: why language matters
 - There are a few children's books that can also be useful such as; Pets in Heaven or What is Doggy Heaven

Services we provide for pet bereavement

When the time comes to say goodbye, we have different options available including home visits, cremation and home burial. We've listed some options below, to help make this difficult time a little easier.



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Pet euthanasia is a heart-wrenching decision that no pet owner wants to face.

We are dedicated to providing empathetic support, guidance, and understanding during this challenging time. Together, we can ensure that your pet's final moments are filled with love, comfort, and dignity.

If you'd like to discuss any of the above with us in more detail, please get in touch on 01262 677269.

1. Communal cremation: This is where pets are cremated with other animals and no ashes are returned
2. Individual cremation: Where ashes can be returned for scattering or kept in an urn or casket
3. Home burial – you can take your pet home with you to bury at home
4. Home Visits – We are also able to provide home visits, where your pet can be put to sleep in familiar surroundings and with familiar people (pre-arranged within working hours)
5. Hair clipping and paw/nose prints can be taken from your pet as a way to remember them.