



# Euthanasia



[www.greystonesvet.ie](http://www.greystonesvet.ie)

## How do I know if it is the right thing to do?

As pet owners we have the privilege and responsibility of caring for and enjoying the company of our pets. Because we share so much of our daily experience with our pets, it is no surprise that we become very emotionally attached. This can make it difficult when serious illness strikes, to assess objectively what is the best road ahead for our much loved pet. We will help you to weigh up all the facts; to provide objectivity, while understanding your fears and concerns as a pet owner. We aim to outline the options for any possible treatment but we also have a responsibility to ensure that your pet's welfare is respected. Unless there is a clear welfare issue, we will not try to force a decision on you, but to work together to come to the best decision for you and your pet.

## How do I arrange it?

If you have made that decision, phone the vet hospital to make an appointment with the vet. The receptionist will arrange a suitable time for you and your pet to come in. Where possible we try to arrange an appointment for quieter times, which makes it less stressful for both you and your pet.

## Can I stay for the euthanasia?

This is a very tough decision for a lot of people to make and some people remain undecided up until the time of the appointment. Many pet owners opt to stay with their pet throughout the procedure. Some opt to remain in the waiting room or prefer to leave straight away. This is not a decision that should be made through guilt. If it will help your grieving process to be present, by all means stay. Some pets are comforted by the presence of a familiar face, but others become much more settled and accepting when they are away from their owner. This is a personal decision and there are no right or wrong answers, just what would be most helpful to you and your pet. You may like to spend time with your pet afterward; you will be most welcome to do this.

## What does the procedure involve?

When you arrive at the vet hospital the nurse will get you to sign a consent form. This is now obliged under Irish legislation. Generally a nurse will need to use light restraint so that the needle can be placed carefully into the vein. This will be necessary in most patients to ensure the euthanasia solution is administered properly. Occasionally sedation may be needed to avoid further stress in a nervous pet. There may be a slight reaction to the needle going into the vein but after this the procedure is pain free and happens quite quickly. The solution used is a strong anaesthetic solution so essentially the process of euthanasia is the administration of an overdose of anaesthetic.

After the solution has been injected, your pet may take a number of deeper breaths than normal. Pets have no awareness of this as they are now under a general anaesthetic. Occasionally muscles will constrict and urine or faeces may be voided. Again, there is no awareness or stress to the pet. The eyes will remain open and there may be some reflex breaths after your pet has passed away.

## What happens afterwards?

There are three options available for your pet's remains. If you wish you can take your pet home for burial. Bear in mind that the local authority have their own regulations regarding burial of animals. Alternatively, we can organise for the pet crematorium to handle the cremation. There are two types of cremation, group cremation or individual cremation. With individual cremation, you can receive your pet's ashes back, so that you can arrange for your own memorial. If you would like additional information about this cremation service, go to [www.petcrematoriumireland.com](http://www.petcrematoriumireland.com)