

## PET BEREAVEMENT

### Introduction

Losing a beloved pet is an extremely difficult time, and making the decision to put your pet to sleep is often very hard. We are here to help and support you in making the right decision, and at the right time, for your family companion. Sometimes it is a decision that you know is coming, and you have plenty of time to spend with your pet and consider your options. Sometimes it happens very suddenly, but both situations can be hard to come to terms with. Each person will react differently at this time, some may need a lot of support and comfort, others require privacy to grieve. The way we deal with pet loss and euthanasia is as individual as our pets themselves.

### Grief

Please remember that the vets, nurses and receptionists are all here if you need to talk about any aspect of pet loss, be it the illness and medication, euthanasia or death, or grief and looking after your pet's remains. Please do not hesitate to come to us, or call us, if you feel you need some support from our team.

### Euthanasia

If you are facing euthanasia for your pet, please do ask any questions or concerns you have. The vet will be able to discuss the signs to look out for in your pet that would suggest they are suffering, and also explain to you the process of euthanasia. Often people bring their pets in to the practice, but we can also arrange a home visit. Some things you may need to think about are whether you would like to be with your pet when they pass away, or not, in which case they will be with a vet and a nurse who will comfort them. It is important for you to remember that it's ok to cry, and you have no need to apologise or try to not cry. We have all lost our own pets and do understand. You are welcome to take collars home, or leave them with your pet, and you may want to take some hair clippings home. Some people choose to have a celebration of their pet's life with lots of treats and toys.

### Burial and Cremation

After your pet has passed away, there are some practical considerations. The main concern is what to do with your pet's remains. You can bury most pets at home legally, and this creates a place where you can visit and remember your pet. However, home burial will not be possible or appropriate in all cases. Your pet can be cremated, which we can arrange for you. You can arrange for a communal cremation, where your pet's ashes remain at the crematorium and are buried in their gardens. Otherwise you can have an individual cremation for your pet, where their ashes will be returned to you. People often keep their pet's ashes, but you can also scatter or bury them. We currently use Norfolk Pet Crematorium, and you can find their website here;

<http://www.norfolkpetcrematorium.com/>

### Support

If you need support before or after your pet has passed away there are a number of resources available to you, including the staff at the Practice. The websites below will provide support and information for people facing pet loss or grieving their pet's passing.

The Blue Cross Pet Bereavement Support Service – 0800 096 6606

<https://www.bluecross.org.uk/pet-bereavement-support>

The RSPCA

<https://www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/pets/ber-eavement>

The Ralph Site

<http://theralphsite.com/>