



COLD LAKE VETERINARY CLINIC

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Euthanasia

Euthanasia is a gentle and humane way to say good-bye to a beloved animal who may be suffering from an acute or chronic illness or injury.

Quality Of Life

The following questions can help determine if quality-of-life has been reduced to the point that euthanasia makes sense. Generally, if your pet can no longer experience the things they once enjoyed or appears to be experiencing more pain than pleasure despite best efforts to make them more comfortable, it may be time.

- Does your pet respond to you?
- Is your pet responsive to the environment?
- Are eating and drinking habits normal?
- Is your pet soiling his/her sleeping area?
- Does your pet have limited mobility?
- Is your pet unable to groom himself/herself?
- Is your pet comfortable? In pain? Content?
- Can your pet still experience simple joys?
- Does your pet participate in usual activities?
- Do you have financial resources to provide care?
- Are you keeping your pet alive, more for you or for your pet?
- Access the following QOL questionnaires:
 - ❖ www.veterinarypartner.com/Content.plx?A=1523
 - ❖ www.journeypet.com/pet-quality-of-life-scale-calculator/
 - ❖ www.vet.osu.edu/vmc/companion/our-services/honoring-bond-support-animal-owners

Making the Decision

A dignified, painless passing can be our final gift to a devoted companion. However, euthanasia is undoubtedly the most difficult and heartbreaking decision any pet owner will ever have to make. When is it time to let go? Is there a right time? The decision-making process is different for every pet and every owner.

Your veterinarian can examine and evaluate your pets' condition, estimate its chances for recovery, explain medical and surgical options (and associated costs) and discuss potential disabilities, outcomes, and long-term problems. If there is any part of the diagnosis or implications for your pet's future that you don't understand, don't hesitate to ask to have it explained again. It may be helpful to follow these steps:

- Collect all pertinent information regarding the illness and treatment options
- Ask about symptoms, how they may progress, and what can be done to manage them to maintain an acceptable quality-of-life.
- If prudent, seek a second opinion. More options may become available, or the same diagnosis from another source may affirm you are doing the best
- As a decision-making aid, access the quality-of-life questions found at the links noted in this brochure
- Try not to avoid the inevitable. Rather, think things through to plan for best- and worst-case scenarios.
- Spend more time with your pet! Celebrate life and the bond you have together. Capture moments and memories in pictures or words as best you can
- Discuss what you would like to do regarding after-care to be prepared when the time comes.

Booking the Appointment

We understand what an emotional roller coaster this can be for pet owners. An appointment for euthanasia can generally be fit into our schedule at any time. Once the decision has been made, we don't want you or your pet to have to wait. We do appreciate that you call to book an appointment prior to coming in so that we can have a room prepared for you.

It's not uncommon for owners to book a euthanasia appointment, but then cancel and reschedule. This is not at all an inconvenience to the clinic, and we are here to help accommodate your needs and wishes in this regard.

The Check-In Process:

Please call from the parking lot when you are here for your appointment, and we will ensure the room is prepared prior to bringing you and your pet inside. Once you are in the room, we will get the logistics out of the way first: we will discuss the after-care options with you, we will have you sign the consent form and then we will take payment.

The Procedure:

Once you and/or the family are ready, we will administer an injection of sedative medications. These sedatives usually take between 5 to 15 minutes for your pet to be settled and sedated, and they will no longer be in any discomfort or pain. Once they are sedated, our staff will place an IV catheter. From there, you are more than welcome to spend more time saying good-bye to your beloved companion, and when you are ready the veterinarian will proceed with the final injections of Alfaxan and Euthanyl.

You are more than welcome to stay for the entire procedure, however if you are unable to be present or only want to be present until your beloved pet is sedated, this is understandable and one of our staff members can be with your pet during the rest of the procedure.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call us at **780-594-5212**.

If your pet should happen to take a sudden turn for the worse after-hours, please call the clinic number above and you will automatically be transferred to our emergency services line.

After-Care Options:

Prior to euthanasia, you should decide what option for after-care is the right option for you.

1. **At-Home Burial:** You can take your pet home to bury, for which there is no charge. Local law dictates remains must be buried at least 5 feet underground.

2. **Private Cremation:** You can request that your pet's ashes to be returned to you. The ashes come back individually in a satin "scatter bag"

There are urns that are available for purchase, you can browse and order online from the privacy of your own home. Please visit our online store and register as a user to see pricing (\$30-\$300 depending on size and style): <https://coldlakevetclinic.clientvantage.ca/miscurns>

Primrose Pet Crematorium also has a supply of urns that you are welcome to browse through in clinic prior to or at your appointment with your pet. Please ask our staff for more information. Prices of urns vary.

3. **Group Cremation:** Alternately, you can let the clinic take care of remains for you, and you would not get your pets ashes returned to you.

Our cremation services are provided by Deb Lobe at **Primrose Pet Crematorium**.

Additional Mementos:

As another memento in addition to or instead of ashes being returned to you, you may choose to order a ceramic pawprint for \$170 + tax. The ceramic impressions are done by Peartree Impressions and samples can be viewed on their website or on their Facebook page.

<https://www.facebook.com/peartreeimpressions/>
www.peartreeimpressions.com

We also offer ink pawprints, free of charge, that are performed in clinic after the procedure.

Cost of the Euthanasia Procedure: \$112 + tax

Costs for After Care Options		
Size of Pet	Private Cremation	Group Cremation
Under 30 lbs	\$140	\$55
30 – 77 lbs	\$150	\$85
78 – 110 lbs	\$165	
111 – 165 lbs	\$205	
Over 165 lbs	\$245	

Grief

Goodbyes are always difficult. Many think of bereavement as the beginning after loss but for many, the grieving process begins much earlier. Often, it begins the day you realize that your pet is approaching the end of its life – even though the final loss of that pet may still be many months away.

The act of saying goodbye is an important step in managing the natural and healthy feelings of sorrow and loss. A last evening with your pet at home, a special day and meal for your pet, or a visit to the clinic if the pet is being hospitalized – be sure to do whatever feels appropriate to allow each family member to have alone time with your pet.

After the euthanasia, you will probably experience mixed feelings of sadness, guilt, and even anger. Many owners are surprised by the intensity of emotion, even if they've previously experienced other forms of loss. Expect that it will take some time to fully accept that your companion is gone, and to adjust to a new life that no longer includes him/her. Realize that everyone in the family will be grieving in their own way. Try to recall and treasure the good times you spent with your pet.

Sometimes well-meaning friends and family may not realize how important your pet was to you, or the intensity of your grief. Comments they make may seem uncaring. Be honest with yourself and others about how you feel, and don't hesitate to reach out for support. Several pet loss support websites are available online, offering a wealth of helpful literature, support groups and chat rooms.

Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement: aplb.org

Be prepared that unexpected emotions may flood through you with your next visit to the vet clinic, or upon entering the room where the euthanasia was performed. Don't be embarrassed if you do get emotional, and don't hesitate to let the clinic staff know what you are feeling.