



Nine questions to ask your veterinarian about euthanasia

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Planning and scheduling a euthanasia can be stressful - of course it is something you wish you'd never have to do. Asking these important questions can help ensure you have the most peaceful and comfortable experience possible for both you and your pet.

1. **What are the particular steps in the procedure?** Every pet deserves medication for relaxation and pain relief before administration of the euthanasia drug. You'll want to make sure this step is included and find out how it is given. An injection is typical and works just fine for most pets, but if you know your loved one hates needles, you should bring this up and see if there is an alternative. This could require advance planning so don't wait to ask when you arrive for the appointment. You'll also want to find out if these initial medications are expected to provide sedation and relaxation or full anesthesia.
2. **Could any of the medications given cause unpleasant effects like nausea and vomiting?** It's never possible to guarantee no unwanted effects, but some drugs are more likely to cause certain reactions than others.
3. **Will you be able to remain with your pet the entire time?** Some clinics may separate the patient from the family in order to give the sedatives and pain medications and/or to place an IV catheter. If this will be stressful to you or your loved one, it is best to discuss it in advance with the vet and see if you can agree on a different game plan.
4. **How much privacy will your family have?** Find out if you will be taken straight to a private room when you arrive, or if you will wait in the public area with other clients. If you will need to sit in the waiting room, is the appointment scheduled at a busy time of day? When you leave (and are upset and grieving), will you need to walk back through the lobby or do you have the option of using a more private exit?
5. **How much time will you be allowed?** If it's important to you not to feel rushed, or you want time to read a poem, pray, or simply spend a few peaceful minutes with your loved one, you'll want to know how much time you'll have so that you can plan accordingly.
6. **Who can be there?** You may want to find out if the number of people who can attend is limited for space or public health reasons, and if you have children who want to be present, whether there is an age restriction.
7. **Can you have other loved ones connect via video call?** This is a lovely option for distant friends and family now that the technology has become so easy to access on our

phones, but you should check on whether the clinic has a policy if this is something you want.

8. **Can your other pets attend?** Many veterinary professionals have observed that the surviving pets seem to do less searching behaviors, and grieve for a shorter period following the loss of their companion, if they are allowed to be present. If this is something you want, you should definitely check with your clinic first as there may be additional logistics or restrictions. This is one reason many of our clients choose euthanasia at home, so that sibling pets can choose on their own whether to be in the room or not.
9. **When will you pay for the services?** This is a detail few consider, and it can be uncomfortable to discuss money. In our practice, we have found it is much easier on the family if they can either take care of the invoice before the appointment or pay at the beginning, rather than trying to handle the payment logistics during the rush of emotions that follow a loved one's passing.

Obviously, we are huge proponents of doing euthanasia at home whenever possible, as it will give you the maximum flexibility, time, and privacy with your loved one and all of their special people. Once they have been through the experience with us, most of our clients say they wouldn't consider doing it any other way. Whatever you decide is best for you, having the answers to the above questions will help it go as well as it can.

Do you have questions for us? Email info@armsofaloha.com or call 808-435-3006.