

What Happens During Euthanasia?

Family Matters

For many pet guardians, this is the question they fear asking the most.

"What actually happens?"

Not because they're unsure of their decision.

But because they want to make sure their beloved companion's final moments are peaceful.

At Amity, we believe that understanding the process removes much of the fear. Our purpose is to **Empower You Through Education**, helping you know exactly what to expect so you can focus on what matters most—being with your pet.

A Peaceful Goodbye

Our goal is simple.

To ensure your pet experiences **as little fear, pain and stress as possible**.

Every pet is different.

Every family is different.

We'll take the time to discuss your wishes beforehand and answer any questions you may have.

There is no rush.

Before We Begin

We'll usually spend a few moments talking with you and giving you time with your pet.

Some families want quiet time together.

Others prefer to talk.

Some bring a favourite blanket or toy.

Others simply want to hold their pet.

There is no right or wrong.

This time belongs to you.

The Sedation

In many cases, we recommend giving a **sedative injection** first.

This helps your pet become relaxed and sleepy, allowing them to drift into a deep, comfortable sleep while surrounded by the people they love.

Not every pet requires sedation, but when appropriate, it helps make the experience as calm and peaceful as possible.

We'll discuss this with you beforehand.

The Final Injection

Once your pet is deeply relaxed or asleep, we administer an overdose of an anaesthetic medication through a vein.

This is the same type of medicine used every day to induce general anaesthesia for surgery.

The difference is simply the dose.

Your pet isn't aware that anything different is happening.

They gently lose consciousness, their breathing slows and then their heart stops.

It is peaceful.

It is painless.

Things That May Happen Afterwards

Although your pet has passed away, you may notice some physical movements afterwards. These are completely normal and can be unsettling if you're not expecting them.

They may include:

- One or several slow, reflex breaths, sometimes continuing intermittently for **up to 10 minutes** after the heart has stopped.
- Small muscle twitches.
- The eyes remaining open.
- Passing urine or faeces as the muscles relax.

These are **natural reflexes after death**. They do **not** mean your pet is awake, aware, breathing normally or suffering. We explain these beforehand because understanding what may happen often provides reassurance during an emotional time.

Take All the Time You Need

Afterwards, there is no expectation for you to leave immediately.

Many families wish to spend a few quiet moments saying goodbye.

Others prefer to leave straight away.

Both are completely understandable.

We'll support whatever feels right for you.

A Final Act of Love

Many guardians tell us afterwards,

"It was much more peaceful than I imagined."

We hope that brings some comfort.

Although saying goodbye is heartbreaking, choosing a peaceful passing rather than allowing unnecessary suffering is one of the greatest acts of kindness we can offer.

It's the final promise we make to those who have trusted us throughout their lives:

To protect them.

To comfort them.

And, when the time comes, to let them go with dignity.

Because they were never just a pet.

They were family.

Family Matters.

If you have questions about end-of-life care or euthanasia, please speak to an Amity vet. We'll answer every question honestly, compassionately and without judgement. We're here to Empower You Through Education and support you through every stage of your pet's journey.