



What to expect from the VetMobile Euthanasia service

We will often call a day or so in advance to chat through what to expect, unless you request for us to talk you through things at the time. I feel it is better to advise what to expect before the day, as you'll hopefully be in a better position to take the information in and make plans as needed e.g. for the cremation.

We allow plenty of time for these appointments so there is no rush.

We will arrive and whilst taking you through the consent form and taking payment (if you have elected to pay at the time rather than with bank transfer) we will give your pet a sedative by injection under the skin. Usually they don't notice this at all as we will distract them with treats and cuddles, and it's a very thin needle.

The sedation will take 10-20 minutes to take effect, so we will leave you with your pet to spend time with them as they relax, and get them comfy in whichever place you feel is best. We will go out to the van and get our equipment ready for the next stage.

We will come back in, and when we all feel your pet is relaxed and drowsy, we will assess and prepare the leg to find a vein. Usually this is possible with the first leg we approach; but sedation can make the blood pressure lower and it may be necessary to change the vein we will use. We will use quiet clippers and some local anaesthetic on the skin. We will place a cannula into a vein. We will sometimes attach a drip line to the cannula we place in your pet's vein; this allows us to give you space to talk to them and be with them without us being in your way.

We next give a small amount of a regular general anaesthetic called propofol - the kind of thing your pet would have received if they went into the surgery for a procedure. This is to ensure that before they pass away, they are completely asleep; this is considered to be the kindest way if possible by those who specialise in palliative veterinary care. It also is much gentler on the body and greatly reduces the amount of dramatic end of life changes we see as they pass.

Once they are asleep, we then give the final injection; this is a barbiturate anaesthetic which is given at overdose level - this stops the breathing and the heart within a minute or two of being given. We sometimes see a few little breaths and then everything is still.

In some very collapsed cats we may opt to inject the barbiturate directly into the kidney once they are sedated as their veins can be very fragile and tricky to cannulate. This is painless for them and it is very quick. It does mean we don't get to give them the propofol but often these cats are almost anaesthetised by the sedative we have given them.

It is worth knowing that many pets don't close their eyes when they die. It is possible to see a small breath or two after the heart has stopped, and some leakage from bladder or bowels, though this is much reduced with the slower gentler protocol we use.

We can assist you at times if needed to move your pet into your car or garden afterwards. We can also liaise with your vets and Dignity Pet Crematorium if you request this.

If you have any questions, just get in touch and ask!