

Death of a Pet



Since cats, dogs and other animals commonly kept as pets do not live as long as humans do, owners must face the death of their beloved companions at some point. It is natural and necessary for individuals to grieve at such a time, but compassion and support can help make their grief easier to bear. We all know how much our companion animals mean to us and appreciate the unique relationships we have with them. Many of us consider them

important family members because they provide companionship, acceptance, security and love. They contribute to our health and well-being, and are always there for us. When a companion animal grows old and sick or is injured accidentally, powerful emotions such as grief, guilt and anger are normal reactions. Dealing with these feelings can be difficult. Many people find it helpful to talk with someone who is familiar with these issues.



SUPPORT GROUPS

Veterinary students all over the country have set up hotlines, in order to help with this difficult process. Please feel free to call the hotline below to find a sympathetic ear.

Virginia

(540) 231-8038

staffed by Virginia-Maryland Regional Veterinary School Students
Tuesday and Thursday 6-9 p.m. Eastern Time

To receive a support package, please send your request to the following address. I include the name and species (dog, cat, bird, etc.) of your pet and a little information about your situation. Please be sure to indicate whether you are representing a veterinarian/clinic.

I SU Pet Loss Support Hotline
2116 Veterinary Medicine
Iowa State University
Ames, Iowa 50011

ATTN: SUPPORT PACKAGES

Recommended Reading

Adults

When Your Pet Dies: How to Cope with Your Feelings; Jamie Quackenbush, M.S.W., and Denise Graveline; Simon & Shuster; 1985. Call the American Animal Hospital Association at (800) 252-2242 to order.

Coping with the Loss of a Pet: A Gentle Guide for All Who Love a Pet; Christina M. Lemieux, Ph.D.; Wallace R. Clark & Company; 1988. Call the publisher at (800) 342-9968 to order.

Children

I'll Always Love You; Hans Wilhelm; Crown Publishers; 1985. Call the publisher at (800) 733-3000 to order.

Because of Flowers and Dancers; Sandra S. Brackenridge; Veterinary Practice Publishing; 1994. Call the publisher at (805) 965-1028 to order.