



# Hospice & End of Life Care

## The Decision to Choose Hospice Care

The Cat Practice provides hospice care to feline patients whose families, along with their veterinarian, have come to the realization that their beloved cat has no chance for recovery and is at the end of his or her life. Our veterinarians and veterinary nurses work together to provide families with information, options, home care instructions, comfort, medical care and emotional support.

### We provide hospice care to:

1. Families whose cats are currently under the care of The Cat Practice.
2. Families who come to The Cat Practice specifically for hospice care.



### STEPS IN OUR HOSPICE PROGRAM

#### 1. At-Home Quality of Life Assessment

The family observes their kitty's behavior and quality of life at home using our ***At-Home Cat Quality of Life Assessment***. This assessment is used to help us assess how your cat might be feeling and any changes in his/her behavior. Once completed by you, it's reviewed by our Veterinary Hospice Nurse Laura Kramek, LVT, who will contact you. This is done at no cost to you.

#### 2. Condition Assessment / Treatment Decisions (at hospital)

Using your *At-Home Cat Quality of Life Assessment*, your veterinarian and veterinary nurse review your cat's original diagnosis and determine what can be done to make your cat feel most comfortable and enjoy the best quality of life. Together we come to a decision that is right for your family. You and your veterinarian will make decisions about:

##### **Curative Treatment**

Stopping any *curative treatment* and related tests may be best for your cat. This decision is made based on an unlikely cure or possibility of your kitty "getting better."

##### **Palliative Care**

Instead, you may choose to provide only *palliative care* that helps to alleviate the symptoms of your cat's illness. This is done to make your cat feel more comfortable and improve his/her quality of life.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** If it's determined that your cat is in intolerable pain or distress that cannot be alleviated, euthanasia should be discussed. No one can make this decision except the cat's family.

#### 3. Hospice Care Plan

Your veterinarian works with your family to formulate an individualized ***Hospice Care Plan*** to preserve quality of life for your cat. This plan will include palliative care to alleviate the symptoms of your cat's illness (such as nausea and dehydration), along with pain management, good nutrition and possible changes in environment and activities.

#### 4. Quality of Life at Home

As you provide care for your cat, your veterinarian and veterinary nurse will work closely with you to monitor your cat's comfort and response to care. We recommend periodic visits with our hospice nurse -- at The Cat Practice or at your home.



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