

The eight questions

Print this. Take it to the appointment. A vet who answers all eight clearly is a vet to book. A vet who deflects two or more is a vet to politely decline. The day of the procedure is not the day to discover you have the wrong practitioner.

1. What sedation will you use, at what dose?

Specific answer expected (e.g. xylazine + ketamine IM, then propofol IV). Vague answers are a flag.

2. Will you confirm unconsciousness before the lethal injection?

Correct answer: yes, with a stated test (toe pinch, palpebral reflex).

3. What lethal agent do you use, and why?

Pentobarbital is gold standard. T-61 is acceptable. A vet who cannot tell you what they use should not be the one using it.

4. Can I be present throughout?

Correct answer: yes, without conditions.

5. How long will the appointment last?

< 30 min = rushed. 45–60 min = appropriate. 90+ for complex cases.

6. What if IV access fails?

Correct answer: calm escalation to intracardiac in a fully unconscious animal. Not multiple distressing attempts.

7. What does cremation cost and how is it arranged?

A clear itemised number, not a hand-wave. Confirm communal vs individual.

8. Can I see the consent form in advance?

A vet who declines is a vet to walk away from. Adequate consent forms name the drugs, doses, and disposition.

ON THE DAY

A short rule of thumb

Have one trusted person present who is not the primary owner — to handle the door, the cremation paperwork, the practical interruptions while you are with your animal.

Eat something before the appointment. Plan nothing for the next 12 hours.

The grief, when it arrives, deserves an empty calendar.

For the framework on when to have the conversation, see the Quality-of-Life Decision Pack at gooddeath.in/shop. For grief in the weeks that follow, see *The Grief Companion*.

