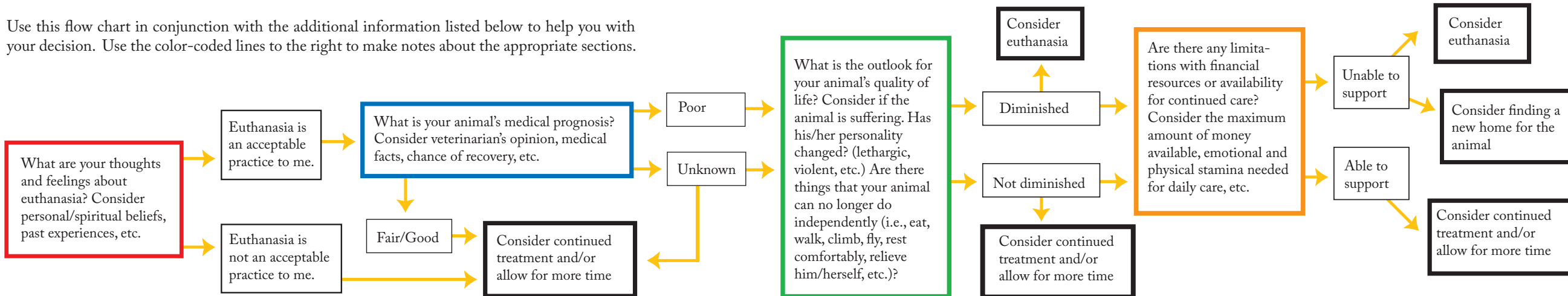


Use this flow chart in conjunction with the additional information listed below to help you with your decision. Use the color-coded lines to the right to make notes about the appropriate sections.



Other Considerations

Has euthanasia been discussed with all necessary parties?

While thinking about your special relationship with your animal, what do you feel would be the most honoring thing to do?

Animal Welfare

“The most widely used current definition, both in Britain and internationally, has come to be that encompassing the ‘Five Freedoms for Animal Welfare’. This approach was first formulated by the Farm Animal Welfare Council, a body set up by the UK government, in response to the Agriculture (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act of 1968, to advise them on issues relating to farm animal welfare and to develop new standards for agricultural practice. However, the same approach is applicable to other types of animal use by humans, since the following Five Freedoms define the needs of animals which should be met under all circumstances.” (Edwards, S. 2005-2007)

As per the NSPCA (2008), “Euthanasia is generally accepted as a means to end suffering. The SPCA definition of suffering includes lifelong incarceration, lack of bonding with humans or its own kind, compromising any of the “five freedoms” including the freedom to express natural behavior, plus mental suffering, which includes but is not limited to kennel or ‘captivity’ stress.”

- The Five Freedoms**
- Freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition
 - Freedom from discomfort due to environment
 - Freedom from pain, injury and disease
 - Freedom to express normal behavior for the species
 - Freedom from fear and distress

Thoughts

Prognosis

Outlook

Personal Resources

Edwards, S. (2005-2007). Animal welfare. In British Society of Animal Sciences. Retrieved February 7, 2008, from http://www.bsas.org.uk/about_the_bsas/issue_papers/animal_welfare/

NSPCA opposed but accepts reality. (2008). DBV SPCA. Retrieved February 7, 2008, from <http://www.nspca.co.za/page.aspx?Id=103&CateId=15&Category=Information&SubCateId=103&SubCategory=Euthanasia>

Euthanasia is a gentle and humane way to say good-bye to a beloved animal who may be suffering from an acute or chronic illness or injury. Depending on your animal's condition and what you and your veterinarian decide, the euthanasia procedure can occur at home (if offered by a veterinarian in your area) or at a veterinarian's office. The most common procedure involves giving the animal an injection that will quickly cause a deep sleep and then causes the heart and breathing to stop. Sometimes a catheter is placed in the vein and a sedative is given to help calm and relax the animal prior to administration of the euthanasia solution. Be aware that certain conditions or circumstances may warrant an alternate approach. Please speak with your veterinarian regarding the approach that is best for you and your animal.



If you would like support during your animal's illness, through the decision-making process, or after your animal has died, please call (865) 755-8839 for a free consultation and resource referral.

Veterinary Social Work
2407 River Drive, Room A205
Knoxville TN 37996-4543
tel: 865.974.8387 | fax: 865.974.5640
vetsocialwork@mail.ag.utk.edu

This brochure is meant to be used for general informational purposes only. It is not a substitute for informed veterinary advice or education regarding medical treatment, euthanasia, and/or end-of-life care. Please discuss your animal's unique situation with your veterinarian. VSW assumes no responsibility for decisions made regarding an animal's care as a result of using this brochure. Brochure created by Danielle Groeling, MSW, LCSW and Tiffany Pennington, VSW Clinical Intern.

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EUTHANASIA

Making the Right Decision



Euthanasia can be one of the most difficult and heartbreaking decisions that any animal lover will ever have to make. This brochure is intended to help you evaluate your

thoughts and feelings about four common psychosocial-emotional factors (feelings and beliefs about euthanasia, medical information, quality of life issues, and personal resources) of the euthanasia decision-making process.

Depending on your animal's condition and as new information regarding your animal's health becomes available, you may need to rework steps in this chart, as well as revise your associated notes. It is sometimes helpful to share and discuss your findings with a trusted person such as a friend, family member, veterinarian, social worker, etc.



*We use the term "animal" because we respect that each of us has a unique relationship with our animal. People can consider their animals as family members, children, friends, and companions. People can also consider their animals as resources, such as the farmer who stewards cattle or other livestock. We respect the uniqueness of each human-animal relationship and seek to support that unique relationship in whatever way is deemed helpful.

