



SAN FRANCISCO
SPCA



SF SPCA
Fospice
Program



Make sure to join the SF SPCA Fospice eGroup
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/spcafostercare>

Manual

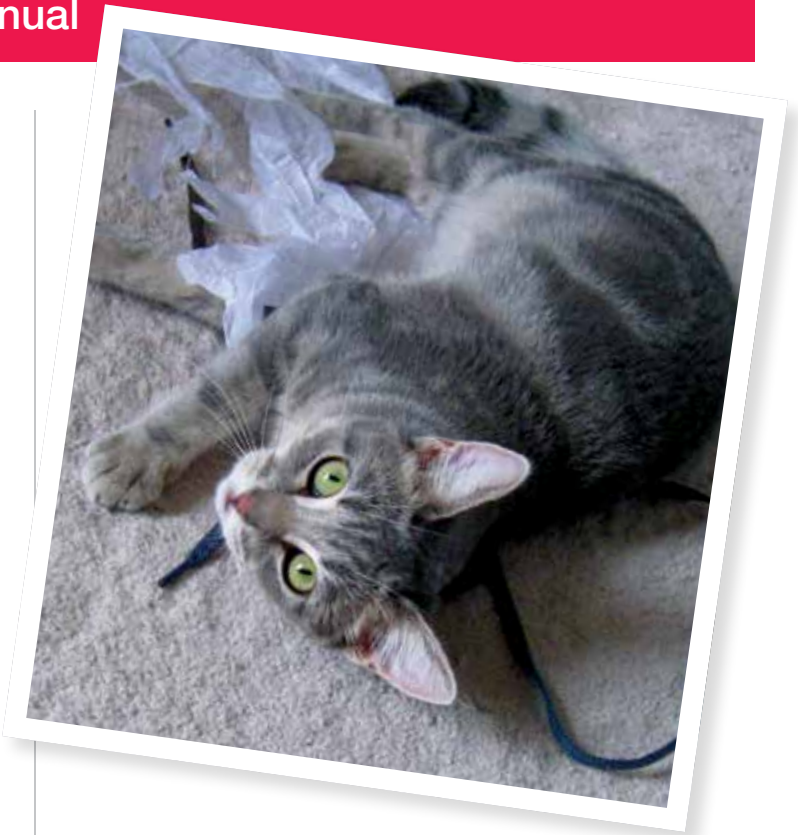









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Fospice (Foster-Hospice)

For many years the SF SPCA Foster Care Program has offered care and support for companion animals at the beginning of life's journey. So hospice care for homeless animals at the end of their lives is just a natural extension of the program's services.

Fospice has been offered in the past, but on a limited scale, and we would like to expand it to help more animals. To do that, we need more Fospice parents to take these animals into their homes knowing that the animals are nearing the end of their lives. You would provide safe and loving homes while deriving great personal satisfaction and unconditional love from these shelter animals.

This is a new type of fostering, and one that we could not do without your help and support. While it can be emotionally challenging to take home a terminal animal, the companionship and love that you receive in return is beyond measure. In the past, these animals would have been euthanized but now because of people like you, they can live out their lives in dignity and comfort.

Thank you for making this possible!



Commonly Asked Questions

What Is a Fospice Patient?

A Fospice animal is an SF SPCA shelter dog or cat with a life-limiting condition. While the animal is not suffering, its medical condition and poor prognosis prevent us from seeking adoptive homes. Older cats make up the majority of our Fospice patients.

How Does the SF SPCA Know When an Animal Needs Hospice Care?

In many cases the animal is a stray transferred to the SF SPCA from SF Animal Care and Control. Once here, the animal's overall condition, observed illness, or age will prompt our medical team to perform diagnostic tests, such as blood work or x-rays. If an animal has a limiting or an untreatable illness (or a variety of conditions), but is otherwise in general good health, it qualifies for Fospice Care.

What Is a Life-Limiting Illness?

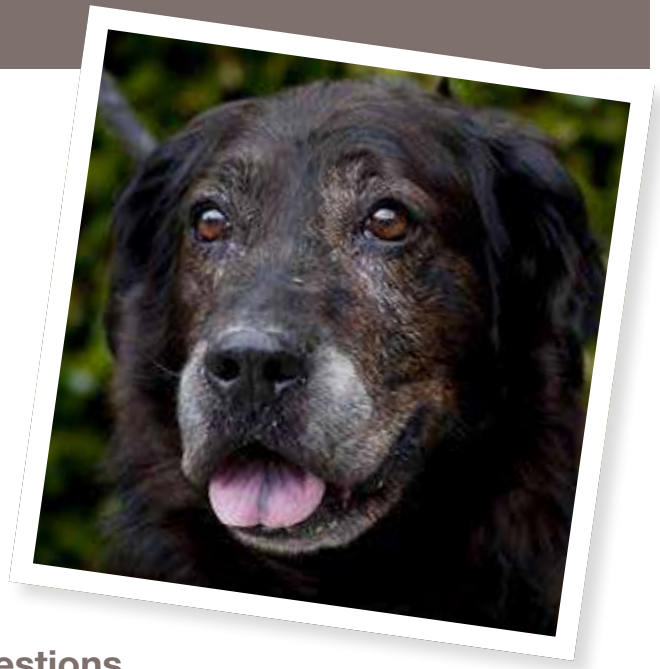
A non-contagious condition such as renal failure, early heart failure, and non-painful types of cancer.

What Is the Role of Fospice Parents?

Our Fospice parents take terminally ill animals into their homes with the knowledge that the animal is nearing the end of his/her life. Volunteers administer prescribed treatments and work closely with SF SPCA veterinarians and the Foster Care Coordinator in ensuring an animal's comfort. Volunteers who provide hospice care enable homeless animals to live — and die — with dignity and in a loving environment.

What Type of Special Care Do Fospice Animals Require?

Each animal's needs will vary, but the following is a list of typical treatments volunteers are trained to administer: Daily oral medications; subcutaneous (i.e. under the skin) fluid therapy; special diet. They are also asked to closely monitor the animal's appetite, water intake, bowel movements, and urination. Because these animals are under medical care, volunteers also commit to regular veterinary appointments at the SF SPCA.



Commonly Asked Questions

Who Pays For a Fospice Animal's Treatment?

The SF SPCA maintains legal guardianship of the animal and food and medical costs are covered through donations to the SF SPCA, a nonprofit agency.

How Long is Fospice Care? What Type of Commitment Is Involved?

Because many animals come to us with no known history, we are unable to determine how advanced a condition may be and cannot predict how an animal may respond to treatment. Fospice parents accept animals knowing that our goal is to keep these animals comfortable, but not extend their life through extreme measures. Fospice care may last a few weeks or months before our medical staff determines that it is time to perform euthanasia. If the animal's condition is stable the Fospice parent and SF SPCA medical staff may arrange to make the animal available for adoption. If you need to go out of town, please call the Foster Coordinator as soon as possible to make arrangements for your Fospice animal until you get back.

How Does the SF SPCA Know When It's Time to Perform Euthanasia?

Our veterinary team works closely with Fospice parents to monitor an animal's quality of life. The following factors are considered when determining if a terminally ill animal should be euthanized: response to medication; appetite/water intake; ability to use litter box or eliminate outdoors; pain threshold; depression/overall behavior.

Can a Volunteer Seek Outside Medical Treatment for a Hospice Animal?

Fospice animals remain under the guardianship of the SF SPCA and any medical treatment outside the agreed Fospice contract must be pre-approved by the Director of Shelter Medical Services.

Can Fospice Animals Be Adopted?

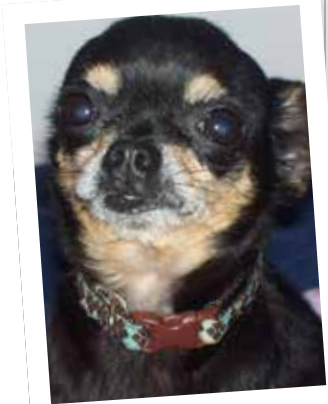
Yes- provided the animal is not suffering and the adopter has the financial means to continue pursuing treatment or comfort care through a private veterinary hospital.



Considerations for Potential Fospice Volunteers

Questions to ask yourself before accepting a hospice animal:

- Am I emotionally ready to accept an animal that I know has a limited time to live? Is my family?
- Am I able to administer daily medications and other types of treatments to an elderly or ill animal?
- Am I comfortable trusting the opinion of the SF SPCA veterinary staff to determine an animal's course of treatment?
- Am I comfortable with the concept of euthanasia for a terminally ill animal?
- Is my household conducive to bringing home a special-needs animal? Will my other animals feel displaced?



Fospice parent responsibilities include:

- Bringing Fospice animals in for re-checks (ranging from monthly to every 6 months)
- Monitoring appetite, weight, energy level, and overall quality of life of their Fospice animal and sending in a monthly update via email
- Administering subcutaneous fluids if necessary
- Administering medication if necessary
- Feeding a special diet if necessary
- Joining the Fospice e-group and staying informed

Fospice parents supply:

- Bedding
- Food and water bowls
- Litter box and litter for cats
- Timely potty breaks for dogs
- SF SPCA approved toys and treats
- Love and attention

The SF SPCA provides:

- Food
- Medications
- 24 hour advice and emergency line
- After hour emergency care through VCA SFVS (VCA San Francisco Veterinary Specialists)
- Humane euthanasia
- Cremation service (Pet's Rest)
- Pet loss support group (meets the first Tuesday of every month with Dr. Betty Carmack. For more information, please go to our website: <http://www.sfspca.org/programs-services/pet-loss-support>.)



Most Common Illnesses

Chronic Kidney Disease

Kidney disease is one of the most common disorders associated with aging in cats and dogs. It is a nonreversible condition affecting the kidneys. The goal of therapy is not to reverse the condition but to slow its progression. Unlimited access to clean fresh water should be provided at all times. Withholding water from an animal with chronic kidney failure for even a short period of time could induce an acute crisis. Learning to give subcutaneous fluids is one of the most important ways you can keep your Fospice cat comfortable; we do not recommend giving subcutaneous fluids to dogs as they are generally not comfortable with the procedure. Secondly, special diets are available, specifically designed to reduce the amount of waste material produced during the digestive process, thereby helping to keep toxins at their lowest level possible.

Treatments

- Subcutaneous fluids, special diets*
- * The special diets provided are K/D wet and dry, NF wet and dry, and Royal Canin Renal LP wet and dry. If the Fospice animal doesn't care for these diets, then a "senior" wet food will be provided.

Signs to look for

- Depression
- Loss of appetite
- Weight loss
- Increased thirst
- Increased desire to urinate

Cancer

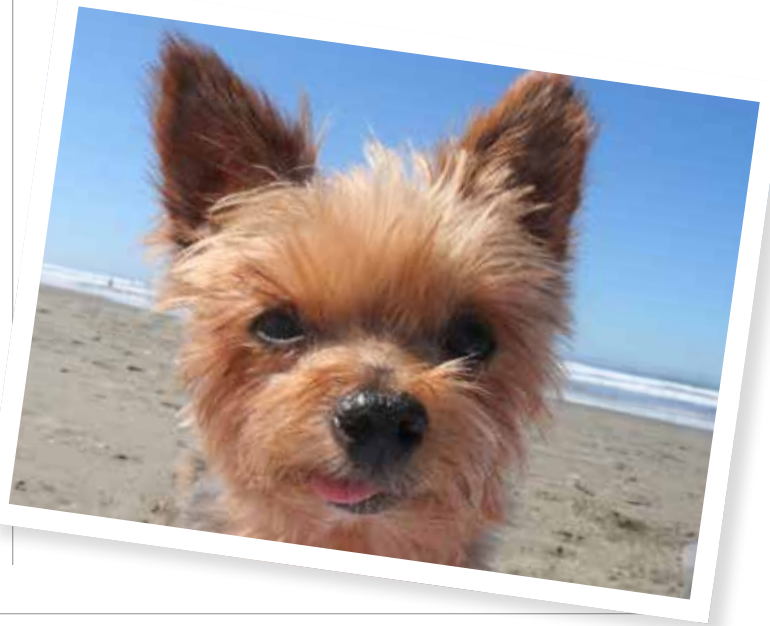
There are many different kinds of cancer but an SF SPCA Fospice animal will generally have a slow growing, non-painful lymphoma. There is no diet restriction and the goal is simply to keep the animal comfortable and to monitor appetite, weight, and energy level.

Treatments

- Possibly oral medication (prednisolone)

Signs to look for

- Weight loss
- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy
- Eating difficulties
- Lameness
- Firm, expanding lumps or masses
- Breathing difficulties
- Changes in urinary or bowel habits





Most Common Illnesses

Heart Disease

Like cancer, there are different types of heart disease, but Fospice animals will have been diagnosed with severe or advanced heart disease with a poor prognosis. There is no special diet necessary, but it will be important to monitor their appetite and weight. There is no restriction on activity level, but keeping play to a low or moderate level is best.

Treatments

- Oral medications

Signs to look for

- Coughing
- Panting
- Decreased energy level
- Increased heart rate

Arthritis

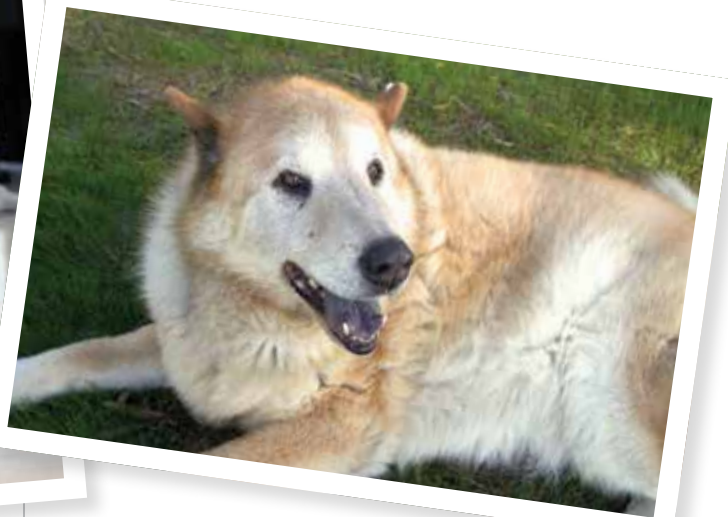
Some of our older shelter animals come in with severe arthritis or hip dysplasia which limits mobility. No special diet is necessary but it will be important to monitor weight; too much weight puts extra stress on the joints. These animals may need assistance in getting up from a prone position and may have difficulty going up or down stairs and getting into cars. Dogs may need slings to help them get up and out for short walks to go to the bathroom.

Treatments

- Oral medications

Signs to look for

- Decreased mobility
- Licking at joints
- Incontinence
- Decreased appetite





Emergency Protocol



Foster Tech and Emergency Line: **(415) 740-1646**

- 1** Call the Foster Tech and Emergency Line at **(415) 740-1646**.
- 2** Speak to a tech (make sure to get their name). Describe what's happening and they will let you know if you need to bring the animal in to the SF SPCA infirmary right away or, if it is after hours, to either **San Francisco SPCA Pacific Heights** or **VCA San Francisco Veterinary Specialists**, the emergency clinic.
- 3** If it is after hours and the tech gives you authorization, bring your foster animal, the pink foster form, and the "Requisition for Pro Bono Services" form with you to **SF SPCA PH** or **VCA SFVS**.
- 4** Make sure to tell **SF SPCA PH** or **VCA SFVS** that you are an SF SPCA Foster Parent and give them the "Requisition for Pro Bono Services" form that you should have received when you picked up your fosters. This way you should not be billed for the visit.
- 5** Before leaving **SF SPCA PH** or **VCA SFVS**, always ask for a copy of the treatment sheet. Information on this sheet is important for future follow up treatment at the SF SPCA infirmary
- 6** **Call the Foster Coordinator or one of the SF SPCA Technicians** the next morning and let them know what happened. The foster animal will probably need to come in to the SF SPCA for a recheck.



Emergency Clinics for the SF SPCA Fosters

San Francisco SPCA Pacific Heights
2343 Fillmore (at Washington Street)
San Francisco, CA 94115
Phone: (415) 522-3030

VCA San Francisco Veterinary Specialist
600 Alabama (at 18th Street)
San Francisco, CA 94110
Phone: (415) 401-9200



Foster Care Phone Numbers and Emails

Foster Coordinator **(415) 522-3542**

Schedule pick-ups and drop-offs. The Foster Coordinator is not locked into these hours and may be able to help you at other times as well.

Foster Technician and Neonatal Caretaker **(415) 740-1646**

For medical questions and daytime emergencies.

Medical and Revaccination Appointments

(415) 554-3084

Monday – Sunday
8:30am – 5:00pm

To make medical appointments (including revaccinations). Please be sure to specify if you need a doctor present at your foster appointment.

Foster Tech and Emergency Line

(415) 740-1646

24 Hours/Day, 7 Days/Week

To get advice about the urgency of a situation and/or to obtain permission to go to the emergency vet if necessary.

- Get the name of the person you speak to and inform the foster coordinator the next morning.



Re-Check Appointments and Re-Ordering Food/Medications

Fospice animals will need to come in to the SF SPCA infirmary for periodic re-checks. These re-check appointments can range from every month to every 6 months depending on the animal's condition. The animals will get weighed and may have blood drawn or blood pressure rechecked. These appointments are to assess the animal and to make sure they are still comfortable. You can call (415) 554-3084 to schedule a re-check appointment. Fospice appointments need to be scheduled with our Director of Shelter Medicine, so be sure to let the front desk staff know that you have a Fospice animal when you make the appointment.

Some of your Fospice animals will be on special diets. These diets cannot be purchased at a store; they are prescription diets and are only available from the SF SPCA. When you need a refill on food (whether it's a special diet or not), please contact the Foster Coordinator and make sure to specify the brand, the flavor, and if you need wet and/or dry food. Please be as specific as you can so we can ensure that we're giving you the correct food, and give us at least 3-4 days notice. Some special diets are not always in stock, so please give us plenty of time to re-order if necessary. The food will be put aside for you with your name on it. Go to the kiosk on the first floor of the Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center and ask them to get it for you.

If you are running low on medication for your Fospice animal, the procedure is the same as for refilling food. Make sure to give us plenty of notice that you are getting low. Some medications need to be ordered and will take time to get in. If the medication needs to be refrigerated, you will need to come to the spay/neuter front desk to pick it up.

We ask that all Fospice parents join our Fospice e-group. You will receive an invitation to join the e-group after you've picked up your first Fospice animal. The e-group will keep you informed and updated on what's going on here at the SF SPCA as well as what's new in the Fospice program. We also use the e-group to remind you to send in an update report on your Fospice animal.

Update Reports

Each month we'll be asking you to email us an update on your Fospice animal. Here are the things we would like to know:

- Appetite**
The same? Less?
Drinking more water?
- Vomiting**
Is the animal vomiting or vomiting more often?
- Weight**
Has the animal gained/lost weight?
- Energy**
Is the energy level the same or has it gone down?
- Stool**
Is the stool firm, loose or diarrhea?
- Urine**
Is the animal urinating more or more often than before?



End of Life — When Is It Time?

Humane Euthanasia

When your Fospice animal's quality of life appears to be diminishing, it is time to consider humane euthanasia. We do not want to wait until the animal is in pain or distress, so although it may seem premature, it is better to perform the euthanasia before the animal begins to suffer. Take a look at the "Quality of Life Scale" and the "Daily Living/Activities Checklist" in our Additional Information section. We've included these to help you monitor the condition of your Fospice animal. We never make these decisions lightly, but take into consideration a number of factors, primarily the comfort of the animal. The doctor will administer a sedative first so that the animal falls asleep, and once they are unconscious the second injection containing pentobarbital is given which causes the breathing and heartbeat to cease in minutes.

Please let us know if you would like to be present at the end or not. It is completely up to you and there is no right or wrong decision, it is really whatever you are comfortable with.

We can have your Fospice animal cremated at Pet's Rest and give you the ashes in a nice wooden box, if that is something that you would like. Not everyone wants to take advantage of this but for some people it gives them a sense of comfort and closure.



Subcutaneous Fluid Therapy

Subcutaneous fluid administration (also called Sub-Q or SQ) may have been prescribed for your fospice animal to help clear waste or to rehydrate the body. This method of treatment can help your fospice animal live more comfortably at home. Most animals tolerate this very well.

Preparation:

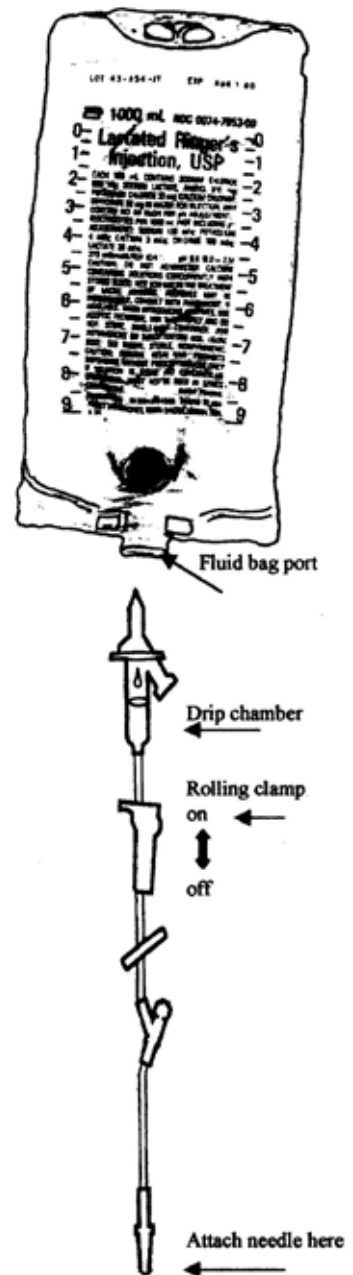
- 1 Remove outer wrappers of fluid bag and drip set fluid line.
- 2 Pull tab to remove protective cover from the port on the fluid bag.
- 3 Close the rolling clamp by pushing the little wheel to the lowest position on the clamp.
- 4 Remove protective cap above the drip chamber and insert drip chamber into the fluid bag port.
- 5 Hang the bag on a hook and squeeze the drip chamber until filled halfway.
- 6 At the other end of the line, replace the cap with an unused needle. Do not touch the needle or the end of the fluid line. Hold needle end of the line over the sink and open the valve to allow the fluid to flow out through the needle. This will remove the air from the line. Stop the drip by rolling the wheel on the valve.
- 7 Return the cover to the needle.

Administration:

- 1 Hang the fluid bag about 3 feet higher than the patient. Gravity helps the fluid to flow more quickly.
- 2 Get settled with patient. The procedure should take about 5 minutes.
- 3 Restrain patient and remove needle cover.
- 4 Lift loose skin over the shoulders and slide needle into the space under the skin. Keep the bevel edge of the needle up and the needle parallel to the pet's body. Be careful not to hit muscle or bone.
- 5 Open clamp on the fluid line while watching the drip chamber to make sure the fluid is running. You may need to adjust the needle angle to attain maximum flow rate. Check the patient to make sure fluid is not running out of the patient.
- 6 When finished, close the clamp and withdraw the needle. Pinch the skin to seal the hole. Return the cover to the needle and replace with an unused needle. The capped, used needle must **NOT** be discarded into the garbage. State law requires "home generated sharps" must be placed in a secure sharps container.

Tips:

- Once the bag is opened it is best to use within the week. For long term storage (more than 2 weeks) it is recommended keeping the fluid bag in the refrigerator. Bring bag out of the refrigerator 4 hours prior to use.
- Store the bag "upside down" (that is, the IV line is on the top) to prevent leaking.
- Warming the fluids is a very kind thing to do for skinny cats or when the weather is cold. Warm fluids by immersing the bag in hot water until equal to skin temp. Be sure to keep the port and IV line out of the water.
- If the drip chamber fills to the top, turn the bag upside down and squeeze the drip chamber so the fluid will run back into the bag.
- Avoid using the V clamp as this can cause a "crimp" and may impede flow.
- Always use a new IV line with each new bag.
- Alternate location of injection site to prevent callus from developing from repeated puncture at the same site.





Tips on Getting Your Fospice Animal to Eat

Many times you will be given a fospice animal that needs to be on a prescription diet that is better for their particular illness. As you will find, most animals will not eat the foods that are good for them. Here are a few tips on trying to get your fospice animal to eat the food that is good for him or her.

- Warming the food in the microwave for a few seconds to room temperature or slightly warmer may make it more palatable (i.e. strengthen the aroma) to the cat.
- Mix different prescription diet foods together. You just might hit on the right combination.
- Mix dry foods together (one the cat likes with a prescription food). Place them in a closed container for a period of time. The scents mix together and your cat may be enticed into eating the prescription food.
- Mix combinations of canned prescription food and canned commercial food together. If they like the combination, try gradually reducing the commercial food and increasing the prescription food.
- To improve flavor, here are a few additives you can safely add (in small amounts) to the prescription diet without damaging the purpose of the diet:
 - warm water
 - tuna juice (salt-free and packed in water only, not vegetable broth which may contain onions)
 - clam juice
 - low-salt chicken broth (without onions)
 - beef broth (without onions)
- It's a good idea to mix a little warm water with the food at any time because every little bit of fluid helps. Do not use bouillon as it's too salty

Fospice cats tend to be pickier about the food that they need to eat, here are some tips geared more specifically towards our feline friends.

- Cats won't eat what they can't smell. Try putting a couple drops of oil from a can of anchovies on the food to increase aroma.
- Sometimes cats can be coaxed to eat. Talk to the cat, stroke the cat, sit with the cat, then offer a plate of food and wait or try to hand-feed.
- Try placing food on the cat's mouth to 'jump-start' the cat. Be careful when doing this that you do not force the cat too much. Cats are sensitive and you can create food aversion by using too much force. Try it once, you'll know right away if it is a helpful tool for your cat.
- To keep food fresh and palatable, feed small amounts at frequent intervals, particularly if your cat is a 'nibbler'.
- If your cat likes 'people tuna', you can try mixing tuna and water in the blender to make 'tuna water' to mix with other foods.
- Try mixing a tiny bit of catnip with the food.
- Older cats sometimes have difficulty eating and chewing. If this is true with your cat, try placing the food in a mound rather than in a level pile. Elevating the plate or bowl a few inches from the floor may help the cat to eat easier, too. Breaking the food into smaller pieces can also help an older cat to eat.

Experiment and be creative.



DR. ALICE VILLALOBOS'

QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE

Pet caregivers can use this Quality of Life Scale to determine **the success of pet hospice care**. Using a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (best), patients can be scored.

* Adapted by Villalobos, A.E., Quality of Life Scale Helps Make Final Call, Veterinary Practice News, Sept. 2004; for Canine and Feline Geriatric Oncology Honoring the Human-Animal Bond, by Blackwell Publishing, Table 10.1, released 2006.

HURT

Adequate pain control, including breathing ability, is first and foremost on the scale. Is the pet's pain successfully managed? Is oxygen necessary?
SCORE

HUNGER

Is the pet eating enough? Does hand feeding help? Does the patient require a feeding tube?
SCORE

HYDRATION

Is the patient hydrated? For patients not drinking enough, use subcutaneous fluids once or twice daily to supplement fluid intake.
SCORE

HYGIENE

The patient should be kept brushed and cleaned, particularly after elimination. Avoid pressure sores and keep all wounds clean.
SCORE

HAPPINESS

Does the pet express joy and interest? Is he responsive to things around him (family, toys, etc.)? Is the pet depressed, lonely, anxious, bored or afraid? Can the pet's bed be close to the family activities and not be isolated?
SCORE

MOBILITY

Can the patient get up without assistance? Does the pet need human or mechanical help (e.g. a cart)? Does he feel like going for a walk? Is he having seizures or stumbling? (Some caregivers feel euthanasia is preferable to amputation, but an animal who has limited mobility but is still alert and responsive can have a good quality of life as long as his caregivers are committed to helping him.)
SCORE

MORE GOOD DAYS THAN BAD

When bad days outnumber good days, quality of life might be too compromised. When a healthy human-animal bond is no longer possible, the caregiver must be made aware that the end is near. The decision needs to be made if the pet is suffering. If death comes peacefully and painlessly, that is OK.
SCORE

70

A C C E P T A B L E

35

U N A C C E P T A B L E

TOTAL SCORE



Daily Living/Activities Checklist

Walking

- Stiff, cannot run
- Walks to eat, drink or toilet only
- No longer can walk

Arising

- Arises slowly, stiff
- Cannot get up without help

Eating and Drinking

- Losing weight and/or dehydrated
- Is not eating and/or drinking

Playfulness

- Limited playfulness, reduced play interest
- Does not play anymore

Toileting

- Cannot hold urine or feces indoors/ has accidents
- Painful urination or defecation on a chronic basis
- Urinates or defecates on self

Affection

- Only shows affection when laying down
- No longer shows affection even when petted or rubbed
- Shows aggression when approached (fangs, growling)

Kristi Freeman, D.V.M, San Diego

Age Comparison Charts



Comparison of Ages Between Cats and Humans

CAT	HUMAN
3 months	5 years
6 months	9 years
1 year	15 years
3 years	28 years
5 years	36 years
7 years	44 years
10 years	56 years
12 years	64 years
15 years	76 years

From *Caring for Your Older Cat*, Chris C. Pinney, DVM



Comparison of Ages Between Dogs and Humans

DOG	HUMAN
3 months	5 years
6 months	9 years
1 year	12 years
3 years	30 years
5 years	40 years
7 years	50 years
10 years	65 years
12 years	75 years
15 years	90 years

From *Caring for Your Older Dog*, Chris C. Pinney, DVM





Introducing a Cat and a Dog

- Have a “safety room” or rooms as well as high places the cat can access but the dog cannot. Baby-gates, cat doors, and clearing high surfaces can accomplish this. It is important that the cat can retreat to regroup and relax away from the dog and then venture forward into “dog territory” at her own pace. The cat should have access to food, water, and litter in this area so no interactions with the dog are forced.
- Never force the cat (or dog) into proximity by holding her, caging her, or otherwise restricting her desire to escape. This is stressful and does not help. Aside from it being inhumane, stress is a common reason for cats to break litter box training.
- For the first introduction, have the dog on leash in case he explodes into chase. If it seems to be going well, take the leash off and supervise closely.
- If the dog is behaving in a friendly and/or cautious way, try to not intervene in their interactions, except to praise and reward the dog for his good manners.
- Interrupt any intense chasing and try to redirect the dog’s attention to another activity — this is very difficult so you may be forced in future to manage the dog on-leash around the cat until you have worked out a routine or divided up the house.
- In the first few weeks, observe the trend: are things getting better or worse? Monitor interactions until there is a pattern or plateau in their relationship.
- If the dog is the newcomer, be sure to give plenty of extra attention to the cat so she does not associate this change with reduced attention and affection. If the newcomer is a cat, it’s also a good idea to make sure the dog associates the new intruder with good things for him. Always strive for positive associations.
- Dogs should not have access to the cat litter box — it is too stressful for the cat and the dog may eat cat feces and litter. Most dogs will also eat cat food the cat leaves behind.



Introducing a Cat to Another Cat

- Help settle the new cat in a small room with litter box, food, water, toys, and a safe place to hide (such as a cat carrier with a towel inside).
- Let the new kitty become comfortable there for 3 or 4 days. Do not allow the cats to interact during this time. It is fine for the resident cat to be sniffing under the door and investigating.
- Switch bedding and other items that have the scent of each of the cats on them. This way each cat can become used to the scent of the other without meeting face to face.
- Spend quality time with each cat on either side of the door — petting, playing, relaxing. Again, they will be aware of each other, in a non-stressful situation. This is often reassuring to both of them.
- If at any point the hissing is intense, or either cat is growling, continue to keep them separate for as long as it takes the upset cat(s) to settle down. Other signs of stress are: not eating, not using the litter box appropriately, overgrooming, etc. (If these symptoms are apparent in either cat, please call the Foster Coordinator). This may mean that the separation needs to last a week or more. If the cats' interaction is more intense than you feel is normal, please call the Foster Coordinator (415) 522-3542.
- If there is no intense hissing from either cat (i.e. loud hissing with wide open mouth and teeth showing, or multiple hisses), prop the door open just about an inch to allow the cats to view each other without being able to make contact. Leave the door like this for a few days. Watch their interactions; if no serious hissing or aggression is noted, then it's time for the next step.
- Open the door and allow the cats to interact on their own time. Do not force either cat to go from one space to another.
- Supervise their interactions. Only let them interact for short sessions: 10 to 15 minutes at a time. Then separate them again. Do this several times a day until you are sure they are tolerating the presence of the other cat, and not fighting, chasing, or watching the other cat intensely. Do not leave them alone together until you are reasonably certain that they will not hurt one another.
- Sometimes it helps to distract the cats with several toys but keep the cats four or more feet apart when playing. Sometimes cats play so hard, that they forget to be upset about the other cat and start to become accustomed to the other cat's presence. There may be rivalry for toys, so this may not always work. Treats may help alleviate this situation—give them treats in the presence of the other cats, to distract and reward them — when they are not hissing.
- Some cat to cat introductions go very smoothly, while others may take weeks or months before the cats learn to tolerate each other. The best thing to do is to go as slowly as necessary — don't rush the introduction. We all want our cats to get along well, and quickly. But, please remember that you are hoping and working for a very long term relationship; being patient at first will pay off! Rushing the introduction will often cause serious problems which may take longer to solve — or in some cases, may never be solved.
- Finally: most cats will adjust to living within a multi-cat household. Like people, some will enjoy it more than others. Patience on the part of all concerned will be more likely to produce an enduring peace than anything else.





Introducing a Dog to Another Dog

Adding a new canine companion to a home with a dog can be great fun and offer extra companionship for both your dog and your family. The dogs need time to build a good relationship. The following tips are suggestions for safety and will help the relationship get off to a great start.

- Introduce the dogs outside your home in a neutral area. Take a short walk in the neighborhood, or at a park nearby.
- Pick up all toys, chews, bones, food bowls, and the resident dog's favorite items. When dogs are creating a relationship these items (resources) may cause rivalry. They can be introduced after a couple of weeks. It is very important to avoid quarrels during these early stages of the "sibling" relationship.
- Also, you must double your supply of water dishes, food dishes, dog beds, and dog toys.



DO give your new dog his/her own confinement area.

DO keep all dog play and socializing positive and brief. This will help avoid over-stimulation or quarrels which may erupt with overly rough or extended play.

DO feed dogs in separate areas, completely closed off from one another.

DO spend time with each dog individually.

DO keep dogs separate when you cannot supervise interactions.

DO supervise dogs when around family members, toys or resting areas.

DO use a "Happy Praising Voice" whenever the dogs are having positive interactions.

DO use a "Strong Voice" to interrupt any growling or bully type behavior. Use a phrase such as "Too Bad" and separate the "bully-dog" to a different area for a few minutes then try again.

DON'T give chews, rawhides, or bones (even if each dog has his/her own) when dogs are together. Wait several weeks, please! The dogs should enjoy these fun chews but only when they are separated, in their own crate or individual confinement area.

DON'T use your hands or body to intervene during a dog quarrel. Use your voice, a loud noise or water to stop the fight. If the dogs do not stop, use a chair or other large object to insert in between them, or pull them apart by the rear legs or tail to separate. Be aware that, when dogs are fighting, they are highly aroused and it is never safe to use your hands to attempt separation.



Terminally Ill Cats Get a Second Chance with the San Francisco SPCA Fospice Program

By **Barbara Kohn**, Cats Examiner
Examiner.com • July 8th, 2009



This is part two of a three-part series running this week on special programs at the San Francisco SPCA (the SF SPCA) saving cats and helping them find loving homes.

Yo is one cat that knows what he likes. That would include both movie time and bedtime sleeping with his human companion Vaughn Korbin, a San Francisco family law attorney. One might not consider any of these activities out of the ordinary for a cat, especially an orange tabby like Yo, which are known to be highly friendly and affectionate. But Yo isn't an ordinary cat. This almost 13 year-old, very handsome boy suffers from liver cancer and how much longer Yo will enjoy the care and comfort of life with Korbin is uncertain. Yo is part of a very unique Fospice or "foster hospice" program of the San Francisco SPCA that gives older, terminally ill cats like Yo a caring, quality environment during their final months.

"As a shelter, we didn't feel good about calling it quits for these animals, and that does include dogs," said Alison Lane, foster coordinator at the SF SPCA. "The shelter's policy is to accept any animal that was originally adopted from us. As a result we receive animals that are 10, 12, even 15 years old. We also accept many older cats from San Francisco Animal

Care and Control. Once in our care, we may find that these animals, while still healthy and thriving, have life-shortening illness that make them unsuitable for traditional adoption."

Among the SF SPCA staff, the idea came up to approach some of the shelter's foster parents about taking on an older animal with medical issues that still had time left. The majority of these volunteers generally take the shelter's kittens — which can be as many as 1200 in one year — to get them through the critical early stage.

Lane said the response was very positive with several foster parents offering to take on special-needs, older cats. Korbin, previously a foster parent for several litters of kittens, was one of them.

"It sounded like an interesting experience to take on a cat such as Yo," said Korbin.

"I enjoyed having the kittens around but thought it might be nice to also have a more mellow older feline companion in the house."



▲ Yo was very underweight when he came to Korbin.

Yo was very underweight when he came to live with Korbin last March. However, his liver cancer is progressing slowly so he hopefully could be around for some time. He's not on medication, Korbin explained, and though he is picky about his food, he fortunately has regained needed pounds.



Under its Fospice program, the SF SPCA provides a carer with all of the animal’s food and medication and covers the cost of any medical procedures. If an individual needs to go out of town, the shelter will take care of the animal during that period of time.



▲ Yo enjoys movie time and naptime.

Lane explained that the only difference between Fospice and adoption is that any final decisions about the animal’s well being, including end of life, will be determined by the SF SPCA. “This program is a very generous gift that someone can give to animal dealing with a terminal situation,” Lane said.

As for Korbin, how will he feel when it’s time to say goodbye to Yo? “I am attached to him,” he said. “Yo greets me yowling at the door each evening when I return from work. But I try to consider him as a very special guest who I can enjoy while he is with me. This is a wonderful program and the reward for me is doing something good for these animals. I would do it again.”

If you are interested in learning more about this very unique Fospice program at the SF SPCA, email foster@sfsPCA.org or call (415) 522-3542.

Additional Resources



Kindred Spirit, Kindred Care

Shannon Fujimoto Nakaya, DVM



Grieving the Death of a Pet

Betty J. Carmack



Caring for Your Older Dog

Chris C. Pinney, DVM



Caring for Your Older Cat

Chris C. Pinney, DVM



SF SPCA Pet Loss Support Group
www.sfsPCA.org/programs-services/pet-loss-support

Phone Numbers and Emergency Protocol



Procedure for Emergencies

If Your Foster Is Having a Medical Emergency:



**Foster Tech and Emergency Line:
(415) 740-1646**

1

Call the Foster Tech and Emergency Line at **(415) 740-1646**.

2

Speak to a tech (make sure to get their name). Describe what's happening and they will let you know if you need to bring the animal in to the SF SPCA infirmary right away or, if it is after hours, to either **San Francisco SPCA Pacific Heights** or **VCA San Francisco Veterinary Specialists**, the emergency clinic.

3

If it is after hours and the tech gives you authorization, bring your foster animal, the pink foster form, and the "Requisition for Pro Bono Services" form with you to **SF SPCA PH** or **VCA SFVS**.

4

Make sure to tell **SF SPCA PH** or **VCA SFVS** that you are an SF SPCA Foster Parent and give them the "Requisition for Pro Bono Services" form that you should have received when you picked up your fosters. This way you should not be billed for the visit.

5

Before leaving **SF SPCA PH** or **VCA SFVS**, always ask for a copy of the treatment sheet. Information on this sheet is important for future follow up treatment at the SF SPCA infirmary

6

Call the Foster Coordinator or one of the SF SPCA Technicians the next morning and let them know what happened. The foster animal will probably need to come in to the SF SPCA for a recheck.



Foster Care Phone Numbers and Emails

Foster Coordinator

(415) 522-3542

Schedule pick-ups and drop-offs. The Foster Coordinator is not locked into these hours and may be able to help you at other times as well.

Foster Technician and Neonatal Caretaker

(415) 740-1646

For medical questions and daytime emergencies.

Medical and Revaccination Appointments

(415) 554-3084

Monday – Sunday
8:30am – 5:00pm

To make medical appointments (including revaccinations). Please be sure to specify if you need a doctor present at your foster appointment.

Foster Tech and Emergency Line

(415) 740-1646

24 Hours/Day, 7 Days/Week

To get advice about the urgency of a situation and/or to obtain permission to go to the emergency vet if necessary.

- Get the name of the person you speak to and inform the foster coordinator the next morning.



Emergency Clinics for the SF SPCA Fosters

San Francisco SPCA Pacific Heights
2343 Fillmore (at Washington Street)
San Francisco, CA 94115
Phone: (415) 522-3030

VCA San Francisco Veterinary Specialist
600 Alabama (at 18th Street)
San Francisco, CA 94110
Phone: (415) 401-9200