



HELPING YOUR PETS THROUGH ANIMAL LOSS

At EndFIP®, we have always considered ourselves, and everyone associated with us, as family. Today, this sense of community – sharing our strength, support and care for one another – seems more important, more fragile, and more meaningful than ever. As a complement to the resources released about healing after the loss of a FIP cat, we want to share some information about how your other pets may feel when they suffer a loss. It's no secret that the bond between humans and their companion animals is very strong, and humans sometimes feel greater loss after losing a pet that they do after losing a human loved one. For pets, the feeling is mutual, and the grieving process is similar.

The loss of a beloved animal companion can be very difficult, and grief is a natural response to this loss for humans and animals alike. After the loss of a pet, the remaining animal companions in the household may experience grief or a distress reaction to the loss and the changes in their daily routine.

If your pet has recently lost a human or animal companion, you might not know how to best comfort him/her. It turns out that, just like humans, animals need time to work through their grief, but there are some things you can do to make your fur baby more comfortable while they're mourning their loss.

Pets may demonstrate grief with a number of different signs or symptoms, such as:

- Decreased appetite
- Change to sleep patterns
- Withdrawal
- Aggression between pets
- Disinterest in their usual activities
- Clinginess
- Aimless wandering
- Increased vocalization

How You Can Help:

Consult with your veterinarian. Talk to your veterinarian about your pet's symptoms, to help determine the best course of action.

Start "new normal" daily routines. Consistency and predictability are important for our companion animals, as it helps to ease their anxiety and cope with the life changes.

Monitor your pet's appetite. Your pet may have a decreased appetite due to confusion with a new routine, or if the lost pet was one to initiate feedings. It's important to keep your pet's diet the same. Although it can be tempting to offer people food or extra treats, added calories can be stressful on your pet's body. It also can result in your pet becoming even less interested in their regular food. *Consult with your veterinarian to help determine best steps.*

Praising and ignoring behavior. When grieving, sometimes pet may develop unwanted and out-of-character behaviors. Ignore those behaviors when you can, and instead promote the calm/desirable behaviors by praising your pet when they demonstrate those. If unwanted behaviors cannot be ignored, calmly interrupt the behavior and redirect your pet to more appropriate behaviors such as obedience commands like sit or stay (if you have a dog).

Time. Pets may need time to adjust. For some pets it can take between two weeks and six months before they return to their normal behavior. While there are medications that can help with your pet's mood and behavior, it is recommended that you wait at least one month before pursuing medication.

If you have a multi-pet household, it's not out of the ordinary for each pet to react differently to the loss of a loved one. There's no one-size-fits-all approach for comforting a grieving pet. Obviously, you know your pet better than anyone else, and in time, this strong bond will help both of you get through the loss and emerge on the other side stronger than ever.

If you are significantly preoccupied with questions or guilt about your animal's death, have witnessed the acute injury or traumatic death of your animal, or are feeling "stuck" in any aspect of your grief, it might be useful to connect with people who can provide extra support.

EndFIP® aims to inspire hope and work in partnership to help alleviate the human suffering and deep grieving caused by FIP. We are here to help, REACH OUT to us at: griefsupport@endfip.com

If you need help with the loss of a cat to FIP, and if you haven't done it already, please consider joining our Invictus group by requesting membership at: www.facebook.com/groups/EndFIPInvictus/

We are tremendously grateful to each of you as friends within the EndFIP® family. Thank you for being passionate advocates and for all that you do in the global quest to end FIP. We appreciate your friendship, loyalty, and support, and never take it for granted. You are in our thoughts, and we hope you, and your loved ones are safe and well during this historic – but temporary! – period for humanity.

With love for ALL animals

