



What to Expect: Non-referral Necropsy

INFORMATION & GUIDELINES

We realize the loss of an animal may be a stressful experience, and we are sorry for your loss. Veterinary pathologists perform necropsies (autopsy on an animal) in order to determine the cause of death or the extent of disease. In most circumstances, your veterinarian orders the necropsy.

UTCVM prefers to receive all animals for necropsy through a veterinarian who can provide information important for the pathologist to make decisions during the examination. However, if you do not have a veterinarian or if you are unable to ask your primary care veterinarian to refer the case to UTCVM on your behalf, you may bring the animal to UTCVM for a non-referral necropsy. Please keep in mind that results of necropsy are most effective when your primary care veterinarian is involved and receives the results. These can be helpful as they may have pertinent medical information about the case and can provide the best support for you and your other animals. For these reasons, we encourage you to work with your primary care veterinarian to obtain a referral to the necropsy service.

When you bring your animal in for a necropsy, you will be given a form to fill out with your animal's medical history, any symptoms you are aware of, and any known information about the circumstances of your animal's death. The detailed information will aid the pathologist during the necropsy. You will also be asked to provide a contact phone number to receive initial findings and a mailing address to receive the finalized necropsy report. If you decide to use this service, please call prior to dropping off animals for necropsy (865-974-8387). You may also call to receive a cost estimate. You will be asked to pay for any non-referral necropsy service charges at the time of registration.

COMMUNICATIONS

Necropsy examinations typically occur within 24-48 hours of admission. Within 24 hours of completion of the necropsy's initial phase, you will receive a phone call to provide a summary of the examination's findings. Sometimes permission to do other tests will be discussed at this time. A finalized report can take 4-6 weeks to complete. The non-referral necropsy charge covers the necropsy procedure as well as histology and other routine tests at the pathologist's discretion. Toxicology in the case of suspected poisoning is not covered in the charge and may be an additional cost.

Following completion of the final report, a summary letter along with the pathology report will be mailed to you, the owner. At times, the findings may require intervention for other animals, such as vaccination, deworming etc. The UTCVM pathologists cannot oversee these interventions, therefore involvement of a veterinarian may be necessary to determine a plan and best course of action for the home or farm.

Non-referral cases cannot be released back to the owner due to disease risk. You may choose routine disposal or private cremation. Routine disposal is included in your bill. If you choose to have your animal cremated after necropsy, you must make arrangements with a private cremation service (Resthaven, Tri-County, or Yeargens) that will pick up the body from UTCVM after the necropsy is complete. The cremation service will bill you separately and coordinate the return of your animal's ashes.

Thank you for choosing UTCVM Veterinary Medical Center.