

NECROPSY PROTOCOL FOR VETERINARIANS



PHONE: 855.447.3647 | **EMAIL:** grdogs@caninelifetimehealth.org

HOURS: MON, TUE, THURS 7:00 am – 4:00 pm MT | WED, FRI 7:00 am – 12:00 pm MT

WHY DO A NECROPSY?

A necropsy provides invaluable data on the circumstances surrounding the final moments of our esteemed heroes. This information will help dogs and owners everywhere in the fight against cancer.

We understand that necropsies can be difficult and emotional. Therefore, we ask that this decision is not made lightly and that both owners and veterinarians feel comfortable proceeding with a necropsy.



TYPES OF NECROPSIES



COSMETIC

The least invasive option; includes sampling of any diseased tissues (similar to a biopsy procedure).

PARTIAL

Includes collecting diseased tissue and several of the core tissues (liver, kidney, spleen, heart, lung and bone marrow) in addition to diseased tissue.

FULL

Includes the collection of diseased tissues, core tissues and more involved samples such as the brain and spinal cord. This option is typically performed at a university or a diagnostic facility.

NECROPSY SAMPLE COLLECTION

CLINICAL PATHOLOGY consists of whole blood, serum, urine and stool. It is not common to collect these samples at the time of death.

HISTOPATHOLOGY consists of tissue samples of diseased and healthy tissue related to the cause of death or any malignancies, as well as the core tissues; liver, kidney, spleen, heart, lung and bone marrow.

OWNERS WITH A NECROPSY KIT ON HAND

- The current kit will have supplies for **Zoetis** and **Azenta** and will have an orange sticker on the outer box that says **Azenta** on it.
- Previous kits will have materials for **Fisher** and/or **Antech**. These kits can still be used, but the Study team must replace the shipping labels and forms. *Please contact the Study team to receive updated materials.*

OWNERS THAT DO NOT HAVE A NECROPSY KIT ON HAND

- Instructions are available at morrisanimalfoundation.org/grls-veterinarians.
- Tissue(s) for the necropsy should be collected in formalin using a container(s) with a tight-fitting lid.
- Use 10 parts of formalin to 1 part tissue, by volume.
- Clinical pathology samples can be stored in the fridge in their respective tubes until the kit arrives.

CONSIDERATIONS

Any willing veterinarian can perform a necropsy, but a necropsy is not required. Necropsies must be performed within 12-24 hours postmortem, with remains kept cool but **never frozen**.

Discuss the cost of the necropsy with the owner ahead of time. The Study can reimburse up to \$500, as long as the money has not previously been used for a biopsy or cytology. **Please note that the Study does not cover cremation charges.**

Only perform a cosmetic necropsy if the owner wishes to pursue burial. Discuss options for private cremation ahead of time.

Please always check with the owner before collecting brain samples. For any necropsy, we ask that veterinarians only collect samples they are comfortable with. Regardless of what samples are collected, please **DO NOT** freeze any samples.



Kits can be shipped priority overnight Monday-Friday. Kits mailed on Friday will arrive on Monday. If you are unable to wait for a kit to arrive, the GRLS study team can provide shipping labels and instructions via email.