



Overview of Necropsy Procedures

When an enrolled dog dies, the owner is encouraged, but not required, to consent to a necropsy. This postmortem examination can provide valuable information about the cause of death, and contribute healthy and diseased tissue samples for future study.

Necropsy Client Consent

- Owners are encouraged to discuss necropsy with their veterinarians throughout their dog's lifetime in order to ease the stress of end-of-life decisions.
- Each dog's online study profile contains a Necropsy Client Consent form to designate preference regarding this procedure. Owners may update their preference at any time. A printable form is available to sign and keep on file in the dog's medical record.

Necropsy Options

- Owners may elect a complete necropsy (all tissues are sampled, burial is not available) or a cosmetic necropsy (only tissues accessible via standard surgical approaches are sampled and the remains can be returned for burial).
- Necropsy may be performed by a primary care veterinarian or referred to a specialist.
- If the owner is unable to find a veterinarian to perform a full necropsy, the attending veterinarian is requested to sample at least the organ(s) of interest in the dog's cause of death (example – spleen in the case of suspected hemangiosarcoma).
- Final arrangements for burial or cremation are determined by the owner, attending veterinarian and local law.

Please note that the entire body is NOT shipped to Morris Animal Foundation and Morris Animal Foundation does NOT conduct the necropsy.

Necropsy Instructions and Supplies

- Necropsy instructions are available at caninelifetimehealth.org in the Study Veterinarian Resources section or by contacting the study team at GRDogs@caninelifetimehealth.org or 855.4GR.DOGS.
- Owners who have consented on their study profile to a necropsy have a packet of instructions, labels, and forms that should be kept with the dog's caregiver in case of an emergency and presented to the attending veterinarian upon the death of the enrolled dog.
- Because the circumstances of each necropsy are unique, the attending veterinarian should contact the study team at 855.4GR.DOGS or the study veterinarian at 303.708.3405 as soon as possible for instructions and supplies (if this kit is not available onsite.)

Morris Animal Foundation's Golden Retriever Lifetime Study Team acknowledges the magnitude of the decision to consent to a necropsy on a beloved companion. Thank you to all owners and veterinarians dedicated to improving the health of all dogs through this groundbreaking study.