

Pet Loss Resources for Other Pets

How Do Pets Grieve?

After the loss of a household pet, you may find that your remaining pets display signs of grief. These signs can vary from subtle to very noticeable changes in your pet's attitude and behavior. Our pets are often deeply bonded to one another, and the loss of a pet can shift household dynamics. Therefore, many pets experience grief and an adjustment period following a loss.

Commonly observed grief behaviors

- Changes in appetite
- Inappropriate elimination
- Increased or decreased vocalization
- Lethargy or withdrawn behavior
- Playing with toys that belonged to the pet who passed away
- Searching for the pet who passed away
- Sleeping where the other pet used to sleep
- Soliciting increased attention

How to help your pet through the grieving period

- If possible, maintain your pet's typical routine (feeding, exercise, and sleep).
- Respect your pet's wishes for attention. Some pets will solicit and appreciate extra attention during this time, while others will prefer their own space.
- Try leaving the TV or radio on when you leave the house.
- Reward calm and relaxed behaviors.



Symptoms of grief can last several weeks to months, but your pet should improve over time. However, if your pet experiences a significant decrease or loss of appetite or any other concerning physical symptoms or behaviors develop, contact your family veterinarian.

Source: University of Florida