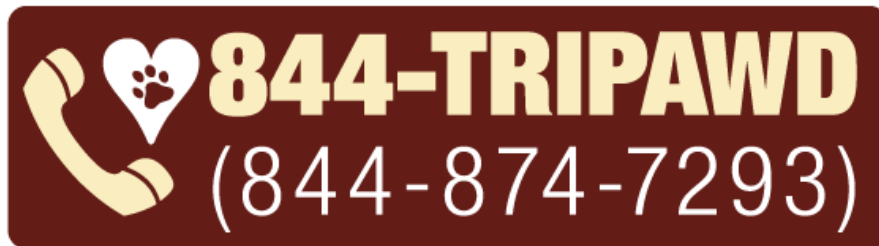


# Tripawds Pals Helpline



Made possible by the Tripawds Foundation, a 501c3 public charity.

Helpful Links for Callers

# Common Questions by Callers

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**NOTE:** The Tripawds Pals Helpline is staffed by volunteers who may suggest you refer to some of the following links which may answer your questions or help address concerns you might have about amputation recovery and care for dogs and cats.

Helpline hosts do not offer veterinary advice. Any information you receive should not be considered medical advice. Please consult your vet with any questions about your pet's health or treatment. By using this service, neither Tripawds nor its Helpline hosts may be held liable for any outcomes based on your current pet's health condition.

## Why These Q&A Links are Here:

*The following Q&A and links are for your reference only.  
These recommended articles address the most common concerns expressed in the [Tripawds Blogs, Forums and Live Chat](#).*

***“Help! I just found out my pet needs an amputation. What do I do!?”***

Review all these FAQs [here](#). This page has links to some great posts addressing many Tripawds FAQs including:

- [FAQS about Tripawd dogs and cats, part 1](#) addresses the following questions:
  - Is amputation right for my dog or cat?
  - Is amputation risky?
  - Is amputation for me or my pet?
  - My vet says my pet is not a good candidate for amputation and I should euthanize. Now what?
  - Will my dog or cat hate me after the amputation?
  - Do tripawd dogs and cats have “normal” lives?
  - I need some evidence. How can I talk to other tripawd parents?
- [What is better, a partial or full amputation?](#)
- [How do I choose the right veterinary practice to help my pet?](#)
- [How do I find a qualified veterinarian for amputation surgery?](#)

- [What questions should I ask my veterinary oncologist?](#)
- [What is bone cancer and what are my treatment options?](#) includes discussion of the following:

Can Removal of the Primary Tumor Expedite Metastasis in Dogs with Osteosarcoma

Will Radiation Help if Postponing Amputation?

Why Amputate Sooner Rather than Later?

Does the Location of a Tumor Matter?

What About Limb Sparing for Lower Extremity Tumors?

The [Tripawds Required Reading List](#) contains many topics, each with links to the best Tripawds blog posts and forum topics that are too numerous to list here.

The [Tripawds Resources page](#) lists numerous helpful websites, support groups, clinical trials, financial help resources and more!

Search the [Tripawds Discussion Forums](#) where they can search for topics or post a question.

[Search All Tripawds Blogs](#) for recovery stories, treatment plans, photos and videos shared by members about their dogs and cats.

Visit the [Tripawds Downloads Blog](#) to purchase the Tripawds e-books and other helpful downloads packed with fast answers to common questions about canine amputation

The [Tripawds Galleries](#) and [Videos](#) pages include many examples of three legged dogs and cats, helpful product reviews and muchmore.

### ***“Can you refer me to a vet in my area?”***

Tripawds does not have a veterinary database, but you can search the [Veterinary Specialist Referrals](#) forum thread where members have made recommendations in many locations.

Also consider visiting:

- [How do I choose the right veterinary practice to help my pet?](#)
- [How do I find a qualified veterinarian for amputation surgery?](#)

### ***“How can I get help to pay my vet bills?”***

Here is a [list of groups that specialize in helping pet parents pay for vet bills](#).

NOTE: The **[Tripawds Fundraising Policy](#)** prohibits members from personal fundraising for vet bills anywhere in our community (i.e., “Go Fund Me” campaigns).

***“I’m not sure my dog / cat will be OK as a Tripawd” OR  
“My vet doesn’t think my dog / cat will make a good Tripawd.”***

PLEASE NOTE: Every dog and cat is different. Only you and your veterinary team can determine if amputation is right for yours. An animal's weight, age and other general health can have a great impact on recovery and quality of life. The vast majority of cats and dogs, however, do recover quickly and adapt well to life on three legs. If you are uncomfortable with your vet's recommendations, please consider seeking a second opinion.

- Hundreds of [Tripawds Blogs](#) and thousands of [forum topics](#) discuss numerous scenarios.

## ***Inspawational Examples of Three Legged Pets***

The following member blogs and forum posts were chosen because they are especially informative on all things tripawd, unusually inspiring, and/or cover special topics.

### **Blind Tripawd Dogs**

[Bonzai](#)

[Cora](#)

### **Puppies**

[Cora](#)

[T-Pod](#)

[Ziggy](#)

[Hurricane Rosie](#)

### **Active Tripawds**

[Bart](#)

[Maggie](#)

[Wyatt Ray Dawg](#)

### **Cats**

[Fang](#)

[Jill](#)

[Prince Vince](#)

### **Large Breed Dogs**

[Nova](#)

[TazzieNova](#)

[Hurricane Rosie](#)

### **Dogs Needing Surgery on a Remaining Limb**

[Murphy](#)

[Chuy](#)

## More Questions

### ***“What about Prosthetics?”***

- To learn about prosthetics for three-legged pets, [see these posts](#)
- Watch these [videos with OrthoPets](#) to learn about braces, prosthetics and more.
- Get a [vet's opinion about prosthetics for amputee dogs](#).
- The vets at North Carolina State describe a new approach to [limb sparing \(salvage\) surgery implants in dogs](#).

### ***“There is a Three-legged Dog/Cat at the Shelter. Can You Help?”***

Tripawds is NOT a rescue organization. We don't place pet in foster care but you can visit the [Tripawds Rescue Forum](#) to post rescue notices and provide adoption updates. Please read the [Rules for Rescue Notices](#) before posting.

## PET CANCER:

### ***“My pet has cancer. What are my treatment options?”***

Always remind the caller and their veterinary team can determine the appropriate treatment for their animal. However, we can provide questions to ask and treatments to consider so the caller is more fully informed as they speak with their vet. Here are some links to consider:

- [Questions to Ask Your Veterinary Oncologist](#)
- [Dr. Dressler's Dog Cancer Survival Guide Kit](#)
- Land of Pure Gold Foundation has information on [canine cancer diagnosis, treatments, what to expect and giving programs for financial assistance](#).
- [When Amputation is not an Option part 1](#)
- [When Amputation is not an Option part 2](#)
- [Bisphosphonates: When Amputation isn't an Option](#)

### **Chemotherapy and Radiation**

- Rainbow's Bridge [has a good page explaining cancer and chemotherapy options](#).
- [Cutting-edge treatment for canine osteosarcoma, The CSU experience](#)
- [Metronomic Chemotherapy](#)
- [How Many Chemo Sessions are Best for Osteosarcoma in Dogs?](#)

- The Canadian Veterinary Journal [discusses the uses and benefits of Palliative Radiation Therapy for osteosarcoma](#).
- [How to Monitor Health Changes During Chemotherapy](#)
- [Can Dogs Take Antioxidants with Chemotherapy?](#)
- [Improve Your Dog's Appetite During Chemotherapy](#)

### **Alternative Treatments**

- [Holistic Pet Care Helps Cats and Dogs Fight Cancer, Stay Healthy](#)
- [Holistic Pet Care: Meet Dr. McCullough of A Path With Paws](#)
- Diet is one of the most important things you can do for cancer dogs. See [Jerry's canine cancer diet and supplements](#) and other [Tripawd Hero diet tips](#) for great examples.
- Fight your dog's cancer with [K9 Immunity medicinal mushroom](#) holistic therapy.
- [Learn About Mushroom Based Immunity Supplements](#)
- [Holistic Dog](#): Links for Canine Wellness and Natural Treatments of Ailments
- Find cancer information, diet and supplement tips at [DogAware](#).
- Discover vet-approved holistic cancer treatments at [a Path with Paws](#), presented by Dr. Lena McCullough, DVM and certified veterinary acupuncturist.
- More holistic veterinarian-approved resources are found at [MyHolisticPetVet](#).
- For a great summary of Treating Cancer and Immune Support systems, see this summary of the [Hoxsey and Essaic Formula Holistic treatments](#).
- The [Animals and Artemisinin Yahoo Group](#) exists to support those seeking alternative cancer therapy with Artemisinin, also known as qinghaosu.
- [Artemisinin FAQs for Dog and Cat Cancer](#)
- [Help Your Dog Fight Cancer](#) is a website with lots of resources, based on [Laurie Kaplan's books](#) about canine cancer.

## Life After Surgery:

### ***“How do they do after amputation?”***

A great starting point for answers to post-amp FAQs can be found in the Tripawds News Blog Post: [The Top Five Questions About Amputation And Coping with Bone Cancer](#).

While these are dog-centric and geared towards those with a cancer diagnosis most of this information can be applied to cats and pets without cancer as well—includes answers to the following questions:

- How do we know that amputation is the right decision?
- My vet says my dog isn't a candidate for amputation. Now what?
- What can we expect the first few days after surgery?
- What can I do to make my dog's recovery easier?
- It's been 7 days after surgery and my dog isn't behaving like he used to. I think he is depressed. Is this normal?

[Five More Questions About Amputation and Coping with Bone Cancer](#) answers these questions:

- My dog just had surgery a few days ago and the incision area is all puffy and swollen. Is that normal?
- My dog has bone cancer. Should we do chemotherapy?
- My dog sometimes cries out and licks the area where his leg used to be. Like it's sore. I think he's depressed that his leg is gone. Why is he acting like this?
- When will my dog be able to get back to hiking and swimming again?
- How will other dogs react to my Tripawd?

In addition, the [Resources](#) and [Required Reading List](#) pages contain many topics relevant to post-amputation issues including the following post-amputation issues:

- [Pain Relief Tips for Tripawd Cats and Dogs](#)
- [Prevent and Manage Pain in Dogs and Cats](#)
- [Side Effects After Amputation](#)
- [Suture Reactions at Amputation Site](#)
- [Fluid Build-Up and Seromas](#)
- [Post-Surgery Incision Care for Dogs \(good for cats too!\)](#)

## **“What kind of Gear will my pet need?”**

For the most helpful product recommendations, please visit the [Tripawds Gear blog](#). For questions about anything in the Gear store, or to order by phone, please call 707-845-3129.

### ***“Will my dog need a harness?”***

Not every dog needs one. They are most handy when you have high-clearance vehicles or multiple steps in your home. There are a number of great harnesses out there. Some work best for front-leg amputees and some work best for rear leg amputees.

To compare the pros and cons of each harness, please review:

- [Which harness is right for my dog?](#)

### ***“Will my dog need boots?”***

Traction on slippery surfaces is critical for animal amputees, boots are optional. It really depends on what you need them for. The Ruffwear dog boot are great for dogs that are active outdoors. Pawz are great for indoor traction and can serve double duty if your pup has an abrasion or cut on a paw that needs soaking.

Boots are not advised for dogs with mobility issues that hinder their ability to walk, such as degenerative myelopathy.

The Tripawds Gear Blog has a page devoted to [traction options](#) and tips on [how to introduce a dog to wearing boots](#).

### ***“Will my dog need a wheelchair?”***

Typically that depends on the age and condition of the animal. Some people get carts, others use wagons or pet strollers. **Wheelchairs should only be used under direct supervision of a rehabilitation veterinarian.** Here are links that tell more:

- Review [All Tripawds News Blog Posts About Wheelchairs](#) for dogs
- Research [when and how wheelchairs can help Tripawd dogs and cats](#).
- [Eddie's Wheels](#) makes wheelchairs for dogs of all sizes including front wheel carts for forelimb amputees.
- Those who can't afford a wheelchair can contact the [Rolling Dog Project](#) on Facebook. He makes carts for free.
- [Strollers Help Dogs and Cats Get Out](#)
- Member review of the [Pet Gear Expedition Pet Stroller](#)

## **End of Life Questions**

### ***“I think my dog / cat is dying.”***

If you believe your dog or cat is in a life-threatening situation, **call an emergency vet.**



Tripawds does not provide advice about emergencies, which treatments and pain medications are best, or how to use them.

If it is not an emergency situation, these links can help you become aware about:

- [The Quality of Life Scale](#)
- [Hospice Guide and Grief Support Resources](#)
- [Hospice Helps Cope with Loss](#)

### ***“How Do I Know it is Time?”***

There are various ways to measure quality of life for our pets. As we all know, it can be difficult to know when to let go. This can be an agonizing process and decision for all of us. Here are some specific links from the [Required Reading List](#) you can refer to for tips:

- [Penny Jars Measure a Dog's Quality of Life](#)
- [Question Yourself to Prepare for Pet Loss](#)
- [Spirit Jerry: How We Knew His Time Had Come](#)
- [Fear, Guilt and Anticipatory Grief](#)
- [Free Counseling from the Argus Institute](#)

## **Coping With Loss**

### ***“I wish I had someone in my life who understands.”***

Here are various helpful links from the [Tripawds Resources page](#):

- End-of-life and pet loss resources are available in the [Tripawds “Coping with Loss” Discussion Forum](#).
- Get free help from professionally trained volunteers in pet bereavement counseling from the [Association for Pet Loss and Bereavement](#). Includes a live chat, discussion and more.
- Colorado State University's [Argus Institute](#) offers nationwide counseling for anyone experiencing challenges surrounding their pet's health care.
- Learn poignant end-of-life lessons from your dog in [the Legend of Beezer and Boomer by Doug Koltavy](#)
- Author Moira Anderson Allen, M.Ed. has two great articles about pet loss [Defining “Quality of Life”](#) and [Ten Tips on Coping with Pet Loss](#).
- The University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine has a [Pet Loss and Bereavement for Pet Owners](#) section on their website.
- For a list of veterinary hospice care resources and grief support counselors, visit [Land of Pure Gold Foundation's Vet Hospice Care page](#) (scroll down about halfway).
- Additional pet loss insight can be found at [“Grieving the Loss of a Pet”](#).
- [Moving on](#) after loss of your tripawd. Tips from Tripawds members on how to fill the void.

# Thank You!

Tripawds is a user-supported community that relies on member support, especially to keep the toll-free Helpline available.

**If you have found these resources helpful, and you are able to do so, a donation to Tripawds Foundation is greatly appreciated!**

Tax deductible online donations to the Foundation can be made at <http://www.tripawds.org/give>

Honor your three legged heroes and angels with a tribute on the Honor Roll: <http://tripawds.org/donors>

You can also support the Tripawds Foundation by donating by mail:

**Tripawds Foundation  
240 Rainbow Dr, #14065  
Livingston, TX 77399**

## **About the Foundation:**

The Tripawds Foundation is a 501(c)(3) public charity

- Funds are used for our mission of maintaining an educational forum and supportive community,
- We are also a resource for animal organizations and shelters with needs related to amputee animals.
- Projects like this hotline are paid for with donations which also help keep the Tripawds Community online and free.
- Additional projects will assist amputee pets and their people in as many ways as possible, such as educational materials for vets to hand out to their clients whose pets are facing amputation.