



Quality Of Life Scale

The decision to consider euthanasia for a sick or chronically ill pet is a hard decision to make for many pet owners. This list of questions has been designed by multiple veterinarians to help you consider the quality of life of your pet and if it is the right time for euthanasia. Answer each of the questions in the following sections with a yes or no.

PAIN

- My pet appears to be in pain.
- My pet limps. (If it didn't hurt, they wouldn't limp.)
- My pet's breathing is forced, exaggerated, or otherwise abnormal.
- My pet guards or protects an area of his/her body and may snap if that area is approached or touched.
- My pet's posture is abnormal or different than normal.
- My pet shakes or trembles sometimes during rest.
- My pet is on pain medication and it doesn't work.

APPETITE

- My pet doesn't eat his/her normal food anymore.
- My pet picks at his/her food now but never used to do this.
- My pet walks over to his/her food and looks at it but won't eat or walks away from the food.
- My pet doesn't even want "good stuff" (treats, human foods, snacks) anymore.
- My pet acts nauseated or vomits.
- My pet is losing weight.

HYDRATION

- My pet doesn't drink as much as he/she used to.
- My pet is vomiting or has diarrhea (fluid loss can also contribute to dehydration).

HYGIENE- especially important in cats

- My cat doesn't groom themselves any more.
- My pet's hair is matted, greasy, rough looking, dull, or foul smelling.
- My pet smells like urine or has skin irritation from urine.
- My pet has pressure sores/wounds that won't heal.

ACTIVITY/MOBILITY

- My pet cannot get up without assistance.
- My pet has a hard time getting around and/or limps.
- My pet lays in one place all day long.
- My pet does not want to play ball, go for walks, or do the things he/she used to do.
- My pet falls frequently.

HAPPINESS/MENTAL STATUS

- My pet does not express joy and interest in life.
- My pet does not respond to the people that he/she used to respond to.
- My pet does not want to play with toys or do other things that he/she used to enjoy.
- My pet seems dull, not alert, or depressed.

GENERAL BEHAVIOR PATTERNS

- My pet is hiding or sleeping in odd places.
- My pet doesn't greet me when I come home and he/she used to.
- My pet is overly clingy, following me around and he/she never used to do this.
- My pet doesn't care about what is going on around him/her.
- My pet is having more bad days than good days.

Count the number of yes and no answers that you have marked. ____ Yes ____ No

Unfortunately, there isn't a simple point system or scale that will tell you exactly what do for your pet. However, the more yes answers you have, the more likely it is that your pet has a poor quality of life. If this is the case, you have two options:

1. Make major changes to try to improve your pet's quality of life or
2. Euthanize your pet to relieve his/her suffering.