



Quality of Life Scale

Use this Guide to Help Assess Your End-of-Life Options for your Pet.

Objectively evaluating quality of life in our pets can be a difficult and challenging concept. Our goal with this handout is to attempt to help provide a numeric scale to help you evaluate your pet's quality of life, as well as for the family's concerns. It is important to realize that quality of life not only applies to the pet but also applies to the entire family as well.

Part 1: Pet's Quality of Life

Score each section on a numeric scale of 0-2

0 = I agree with the statement (describes my pet)

1 = I see some changes

2 = I disagree with the statement (does not describe my pet)

Your Score

1. Social functions

- a. Desire to be with the family has not changed _____
- b. Interacts normally with family or other pets _____

2. Natural functions

- a. Appetite has stayed the same _____
- b. Drinking has stayed the same _____
- c. Urination habits have stayed the same _____
- d. Bowel movements have stayed the same _____
- e. Ability to ambulate has stayed the same _____

3. Mental Health

- a. Enjoys normal play activities _____
- b. Still dislikes the same things (i.e. "still hates the mailman" = 0) _____
- c. No outward signs of anxiety or stress _____
- d. Does not seem confused or apathetic _____
- e. Does not pace around the house _____
- f. Overall condition has not changed recently _____

TOTAL SCORE

Understanding the Results:

0-8 = Quality of life is most likely adequate. No medical intervention is required yet, but guidance from your Veterinarian may be needed to help identify signs in the future.

9-16 = Quality of life is questionable and medical intervention is needed. Your pet would benefit from veterinary oversight and guidance to evaluate his or her disease progression.

17-36 = Quality of life is definitely a concern. Changes will likely become more progressive and severe. Veterinary guidance will help you better understand the end stages of your pet's disease process so you can make a more informed decision of whether to continue hospice care or elect humane euthanasia.

Part 2: Family's Concerns

Score each item on a numeric scale of 0-2

0 = I am not concerned at this time

1 = There is some concern

2 = I am concerned about this

Your Score

I am concerned about the following things:

1. My pet's suffering _____
2. My desire to perform nursing care for my pet _____
3. My ability to perform nursing care for my pet _____
4. My pet dying alone _____
5. Not knowing when the right time is to euthanize my pet _____
6. Coping with loss of my pet _____
7. Concern for other animals in my household _____
8. Concern for other members of the family (children) _____

TOTAL SCORE _____

Understanding the Results

0-4 = Your concerns are minimal. You have either accepted the inevitable loss of your pet and understand what lies ahead or have not yet given it much thought. Now is the time to begin evaluating your concerns and limitations.

5-9 = Your concerns are mounting. Begin by educating yourself on your pet's condition, which is the best way to ensure you are prepared for the emotional road ahead.

10-16 = Even if your first score was low for your pet, your concerns about losing your pet are valid. Now is the time to build a support system. Veterinary guidance will help you prepare for the medical changes in your pet and help prepare you for the grief ahead.