



Your Pet's Quality of Life

Deciding to euthanize your beloved animal may be one of the most difficult decisions you ever make. But how do you know when it's time? The animal's quality of life is defined by their overall physical and mental well being, not just one aspect or a single day of their life.

Sometimes after reviewing this handout and the chart, people realize their pet is enjoying life and they will have time left with them. Other times, people realize their pets have been suffering more than they were aware and they choose to euthanize, and that's okay. No one knows your pet's quality of life better than you do.

Besides the attached chart, some other tools that may aid you in the decision to euthanize are:

1. Enlist the help of your veterinarian. While they cannot make the decision for you, it is helpful for them to know that you are considering euthanasia.
2. Remember how your pet looked and behaved prior to illness. Sometimes change is gradual, and therefore hard to recognize.
3. Mark good and bad days on a calendar, this could be as simple as a happy face or sad face, or even the score from the following chart. When the "poor" days start to outweigh the "good" days, it may be time to consider euthanasia.
4. Write a concrete list of 5 things your pet loves to do. When your pet is no longer able to do these things, it may be time to consider euthanasia.

Your Pet's Quality of Life Chart

The chart below is designed to help you visualize, track, and monitor aspects of your pet's life. Fill out the appropriate number per question. As mentioned on the previous page, you can do this assessment daily and mark them on a calendar. Remember, the higher numbers on this chart equal a better quality of life.

My Pet...	Life				
	All the time/True	Most of the time	Sometimes	Occasionally	Never/False
Does not show any interest in wanting to play	1	2	3	4	5
Does not respond to my presence or does not interact with me in the same way as before	1	2	3	4	5
Does not enjoy the same activities as before	1	2	3	4	5
Is hiding (in closets, under furniture, etc)	1	2	3	4	5
Demeanor/behavior is not the same as it was prior to diagnosis/illness	1	2	3	4	5
Does not seem to enjoy life	1	2	3	4	5
Has more bad days than good days	1	2	3	4	5
Is sleeping more than usual	1	2	3	4	5
Seems dull, depressed and lethargic	1	2	3	4	5
Seems to be or is experiencing pain (is limping, has trouble getting up/moving, squinting, pain on touching, etc	1	2	3	4	5
Is panting (even while resting)	1	2	3	4	5
Is trembling or shaking	1	2	3	4	5
Is vomiting and/or seems nauseous (is drooling, licking lips, or avoiding food)	1	2	3	4	5
Is not eating well (may only be eating treats or only if fed by hand or human food)	1	2	3	4	5
Is not drinking well	1	2	3	4	5
Is losing weight	1	2	3	4	5
Is having diarrhea often	1	2	3	4	5
Has increased or decreased urination	1	2	3	4	5
Is not moving normally	1	2	3	4	5
Is not as active as normal	1	2	3	4	5
Does not move around me as needed (is always underfoot, or won't move out of your path)	1	2	3	4	5
Needs help to move around normally	1	2	3	4	5
Is unable to keep self clean after soiling	1	2	3	4	5
Has coat that is greasy, matted, or rough looking	1	2	3	4	5

Score
24 – 60 Consider euthanasia
61 – 89 Consult your veterinarian
90 – 120 Continue to monitor

Poor Quality of Life

Good Quality of