



## Pet's Quality of Life Scale

When evaluating the quality of life of your pet, personalized patient and family information is important when reaching an educated, informed, and supported choice that fits not only your pet's medical condition, but also your wishes and expectations. In short, quality of life applies not only to the pet; it also applies to you.

### Score each subsection on a scale of 0-2:

*0 = agree with statement (describes my pet)*

*1 = some changes seen*

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

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### **Social Functions**

- ☐ Desire to be with the family has not changed
- ☐ Interacts normally with family or other pets (i.e., no increased aggression or other changes, playing, grooming themselves)

### **Physical Health**

- ☐ No changes in breathing or panting patterns
- ☐ No outward signs of pain (excessive panting, pacing, and whining are most commonly seen, hesitation getting into cars)
- ☐ No aimless pacing around the house
- ☐ My pet's overall condition has not changed recently

### **Mental Health**

- ☐ Enjoys normal play activities
- ☐ Still dislikes the same thing (i.e., still hates the mailman = 0, or doesn't bark at the mailman anymore = 2)
- ☐ No outward signs of stress or anxiety
- ☐ Does not seem confused or apathetic
- ☐ Nighttime activity is normal, no changes seen. Sleep cycle (routine) is the same.

### **Natural Functions**

- ☐ Appetite has stayed the same
- ☐ Drinking has stayed the same
- ☐ Normal urination habits
- ☐ Normal bowel movement habits
- ☐ Ability to ambulate (walk around) has stayed the same

**Results:**

- 0-8** Quality of life is most likely adequate. No medical intervention required yet, but guidance from your veterinarian may help you identify signs to look for in the future.
- 9-16** Quality of life is questionable and medical intervention is suggested. Your pet would certainly benefit from veterinary oversight and guidance to evaluate the disease process he/she is experiencing.
- 17-32** Quality of life is a definite concern. Changes will likely become more progressive and more severe in the near future. Veterinary guidance will help you better understand the end stages of your pet's disease process in order to make more informed decision of whether to continue hospice care or elect peaceful euthanasia.
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**Discuss these questions below, and the entire Quality of Life Scale, with your family and veterinarian.**

**Below are some questions that assist in gauging your family's time, emotional, and (when appropriate) financial budgets:**

1. Have you ever been through the loss of a pet before? If so, what was your experience (good or bad, and why)?
2. What do you *hope* the life expectancy of your pet will be? What do you *think* it will be?
3. What is the ideal situation you wish for your pet's end of life experience? (at home, pass away in his/her sleep, etc.)

**Suggestions on using this Quality of Life Scale:**

1. Complete the scale at different times of the day, note circadian fluctuations in well-being. (We find most pets tend to do worse at night and better during the day.)
  2. Request multiple members of the family complete the scale; compare observations.
  3. Take periodic photos of your pet to help you objectively assess their physical changes as they age.
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**Resources:**

1. AAHA/AAFP Pain Management Guidelines for Dogs and Cats, [www.aahanet.org/Library/PainMgmt.aspx](http://www.aahanet.org/Library/PainMgmt.aspx)
2. Online hospice journal and quality of life scale: [www.PetHospiceJournal.com](http://www.PetHospiceJournal.com)