

Quality-of-Life Score Sheet (QOL) For Dogs and Cats

A Numerical Score Sheet To Help You Monitor Your Pet's Health

Caregivers can use this scale to assess their pet's health status at any given time. This guide can also be used when close monitoring is needed. It is especially helpful in chronic illnesses and to keep track of the pet's overall status.

To score your pet's condition, use numbers from 0 to 10 (Where a 10 is ideal or normal).

Range	Score	IN GENERAL, HERE IS WHAT TO LOOK FOR
0-10		HURT (Pain) – Trouble breathing outweighs all concerns. Panting is a sign of pain! Proper pain control & breathing ability <u>is top priority</u> . Is pain being treated properly or not? Can the animal breathe easily and at a proper rate? (10-30 breathes/min.) Is supplemental oxygen necessary?
0-10		HUNGER (Appetite) - Is the pet eating enough? Does the pet seem completely disinterested in food? Does hand feeding help? Does the patient need a feeding tube?
0-10		HYDRATION (drinking) - Is the pet dehydrated? For patients not drinking enough water, do they need subcutaneous fluids daily or twice daily to supplement fluid intake?
0-10		HYGIENE (grooming / staying clean) - Lack of self-cleaning is a sign that pets have no energy for this normal activity. The pet should be brushed and kept cleaned, particularly after eliminations. Avoid pressure sores with soft bedding and keep all wounds clean.
0-10		HAPPINESS (JOY!) - Does the pet express any daily joy in life? Is the pet interest in people or other buddies? Is the pet responsive to family, toys? Is the pet depressed, lonely, anxious, bored or afraid? Does moving the pet's bed closer to family activities help?
0-10		MOBILITY (get up / get down) - Can the pet get up without assistance? Does the pet need human or mechanical help? Is the dog willing/able to go out for short walks? Is the pet having seizures or stumbling? Even with an amputation, a pet with 3 legs or limited mobility can be alert, happy and have a very good QOL. Remember to help with ramps, a cart, a harness, braces, and rehab.
0-10		MORE GOOD DAYS THAN BAD (your honest daily opinion) - This is one of the most important subjective assessments a pet owner can make. When bad days outnumber good days, QOL may be failing badly. You know when your pet crosses over the line of more bad days than good ones, but this varies day by day. Make an overall assessment here. **If you are monitoring a very sick pet, then remember if a peaceful death comes painlessly and at home, that is okay. <u>But we do not want</u> to wait until every day is painful and the pet cannot live an acceptable quality of life.
*TOTAL		*A total <u>over 35 points</u> represents an acceptable quality of life where you can continue with care and or hospice. Under 35 means you need to advance to the End-of-Life Score Sheet to determine when euthanasia might be needed.