

Canine Quality of Life Scale

It is difficult to be objective when your pet has serious health concerns. Try to work through these questions to help get a better idea of your dog's condition. Grade each criterion using a scale of 0 to 10 (0 being the worst and 10 being ideal).

Criterion	Score
Hurt – Assessing pain and breathing ability are critical. Trouble breathing outweighs all other concerns. Can your dog breathe normally without oxygen supplementation? Is your pet in pain (whining, tender to touch, panting, trembling, immobility) despite current pain treatment?	
Hunger – Is your dog eating enough on his/her own? Does hand feeding help?	
Hydration – Is your dog drinking enough on his/her own? If not, are you giving subcutaneous fluids to prevent dehydration?	
Hygiene – Are you keeping your dog clean and brushed? Is he/she able to go outside to eliminate or if not are you able to manage with diapers or other means to maintain hygiene? Are you preventing pressure sores with soft bedding? Are any wounds kept clean?	
Happiness – Does your dog appear happy, not showing signs of fear, anxiety, boredom? Is he/she still interested in the people, toys, activities that he/she used to enjoy? If not mobile, do you bring your dog near family activities so as not to be isolated?	
Mobility – Can your dog get up and walk without help? If not, are you physically able to help him/her or provide mechanical assistance (slings, ramps, cart)? Is he having seizures or falling?	
More Good Days Than Bad – When bad days outnumber good days, quality of life might be too compromised and it may be unfair to make your dog go on. If 50% of days are good days, score 5, if 20% of days are good days, score 2, etc. The decision for euthanasia needs to be made if your dog is suffering. If death comes peacefully and painlessly at home, that is okay.	
Total score	
*A total score >35 is a good indicator of an acceptable quality of life.	

Modified by Francine K. Rattner, VMD. Originally created by Alice Villalobos, DVM and adapted for Feline Internal Medicine with permission from Willey-Blackwell Publishing, Canine and Feline Geriatric Oncology: Honoring the Human-Animal Bond.