

QUALITY OF LIFE SCALE

(The H5M2 Scale)

WHEN SHOULD I PUT MY DOG DOWN?

Bring this to your vet to talk about your pet's quality of life. Your vet can help you learn how to score each of these factors.

QOL Factor

Score 0-10
(10 is ideal)

Description

HURT

Adequate pain control and breathing ability are of top concern. If your dog can't breathe properly, nothing else matters.

Can you provide oxygen supplementation if necessary?

Is their breathing labored?

Is your dog's pain well-managed?

HUNGER

Is your dog able to eat enough nutritious food?

Are you able to hand-feed if needed? Does your dog need a feeding tube?

Are you able to blend food when necessary and find foods that are nutritious that they will eat?

HYDRATION

Is your dog dehydrated (skin slowly retracts after being pinched)?

Is your dog drinking enough (10 ml per pound per day)?

Are you willing to administer subcutaneous fluids if needed?

HYGIENE

Are you able to perform proper grooming for your pet? (brushing, cleaning after eliminations, keeping them free of parasites, cleaning the coat and wounds)

HAPPINESS

Does your dog express joy and interest?

Is your pet responsive to family, toys, etc.?

Is your dog depressed, lonely, anxious, bored or afraid?

Can your dog's bed be moved to be close to family activities?

Do you provide routine fun time that the pet enjoys?

MOBILITY

Does your dog feel like going for a walk? Is your pet having seizures or stumbling?

Can your dog get up without assistance?

Can you provide mechanical help (e.g., a cart) if needed?

Are you willing to move your pet to different locations and change their position at least every two hours if they are immobile? (must provide soft bedding)

Note: Some caregivers feel that euthanasia is preferable to amputation, but an animal with limited mobility who is still alert and responsive can have a good quality of life as long as the family is committed to helping their dog.

MORE GOOD DAYS THAN BAD

Are there more "bad" days, where the pet seems to be "turned off" to life?

Do more days include things like vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, frustration, falling down, seizures, etc.?

When bad days outnumber good days, the quality of life might be too compromised. When a healthy human-animal bond is no longer possible, the end is near. The decision for euthanasia needs to be made if your dog is suffering. It is ideal when a dog's passing comes peacefully and painlessly.

TOTAL

*A total over 35 points represents acceptable life quality to continue with dog hospice. A total of 70 is a perfect score.