

QUALITY

OF LIFE ASSESSMENT FORM

Our pets need us to be their advocates and to ensure we are doing all we can to maintain their comfort. Symptoms of pain, illness or disease can be subtle and many people find it difficult to determine if their pet is suffering. If your vet has requested you complete this form, we encourage you to think about the factors that affect the quality of your pet's life, at this critical stage. We want you to make carefully considered decisions and hope this guide will help you navigate the confusion of ageing, chronic illness or a terminal diagnosis with your pet.

Below are some key attributes that help us systematically consider quality of life for your pet. As time goes on and their illness changes or their capacities reduce, you may need to repeat the evaluation. It is often useful to fill out the assessment form every day and record your results over an extended period. We have provided logs for you to do this for as long as you feel appropriate. In some cases, this process will give you reassurance that your pet is still enjoying life, whilst in others it may make you realise your pet is suffering more than you were aware. Either way, awareness and careful observation will be your pet's best friend.

1. Pain

1 Point

Your pet does not appear to be in pain. They are moving freely, keen for exercise and sleeping well.

2 Points

Your pet has been assessed by a vet recently and prescribed appropriate pain relief for their condition. This medication is working well.

3 Points

Your pet appears painful. They may be vocalising, crying, unable to rest or reluctant to move. Pain medication has been prescribed and is not working adequately, or the side effects of medication are severe. Alternative pain management therapies such as acupuncture have been exhausted.

Signs of pain can be subtle, such as an elevated respiratory rate or laboured breathing, pacing in the house or yard, stiffness, difficulty sitting or standing and reluctance to exercise. Remember lameness is a definite indicator of pain even if your pet is still running / playing readily.



QUALITY

OF LIFE ASSESSMENT FORM

2. Demeanour

1 Point

Your pet appears happy and is keen to interact with you. They greet you readily and are willing to receive attention.

2 Points

Your pet may be a bit irritable and grumpy compared with their normal self. They are still interested in daily family activities but may also be seeking more time to themselves.

3 Points

Hiding and avoiding interaction have become the norm. They appear depressed much of the time and no longer enjoy activities they previously did.

3. Mobility

1 Point

Energy levels are good and exercise or play is still a normal part of their day.

2 Points

Your pet is starting to 'slow up' but is managing well with their prescribed medications and can happily do about half the amount of activity they could do in their youth.

3 Points

Your pet's mobility is dramatically reduced. This may mean they need assistance to stand and navigate the house or that they have little capacity for exercise. You may have noticed they can no longer manage stairs or get into the car by themselves.

Mobility issues and osteoarthritis should be carefully considered when reviewing a pet's quality of life. They can be incredibly debilitating and are often a valid reason for compassionate euthanasia, but can also often be dramatically improved by physical therapy, medication and mobility aids such as boots/ramps/lifts/etc.

QUALITY

OF LIFE ASSESSMENT FORM

4. Appetite

1 Point

Your pet is eating normally and their appetite is good.

2 Points

Your pet's appetite is reduced and they need encouragement to eat or are only eating favourite foods. They may seem to eat more slowly than usual.

3 Points

Appetite is intermittent or even gone completely. Alternatively your pet may be keen enough to eat but there is then vomiting and nausea or diarrhoea.

5. Hydration

1 Point

Water intake is normal.

2 Points

Water intake is abnormal to some degree. In many cases drinking will increase, in others your pet will not be drinking enough.

3 Points

Your pet's level of hydration is inadequate and they require intervention from you (such as syringing or fluids under the skin) to get through the day. Vomiting or diarrhoea may be contributing.

6. Weight

1 Point

Your pet is in an ideal body weight range and is maintaining their body condition well.

2 Points

Your pet is an unhealthy weight however you are monitoring their body shape and change is slow.

3 Points

Weight changes are uncontrolled and increasing or decreasing their food doesn't seem to make any difference. You may have noticed a rapid change to their body shape such as narrowing at the hips from muscle wasting or bloating of the belly.

QUALITY

OF LIFE ASSESSMENT FORM

7. Hygiene & Toileting

1 Point

Toileting patterns are normal and your pet is still grooming normally.

2 Points

You have noticed toileting is not quite normal. They may have difficulty eliminating, be urinating more frequently or passing stools that don't look normal. You may find their personal hygiene has deteriorated and they require some assistance to keep clean.

3 Points

Your pet is unable to toilet normally. They may have developed urinary or faecal incontinence, may be unable to get up from soiled bedding, are often less likely to groom and may go on to develop pressure sores on parts of the body. Their requirement for hygiene care has dramatically increased and is exceeding your capacity to provide it.

8. Rest

1 Point

Your pet is sleeping normally.

2 Points

Your pet sleeps normally most nights but has started sleeping for longer periods than before. They are occasionally disorientated or confused by where they are and who is around.

3 Points

Your pet is unable to settle, anxious and uncomfortable when lying down. They may whimper or cry at night and require medication for a restful sleep. They are often disorientated and cannot be easily calmed.



QUALITY

OF LIFE ASSESSMENT FORM

Daily Assessment

Item	Please Circle Your Pet's Score			Collective Total
	1	2	3	
Pain				
Appetite				
Demeanour/Willingness to Interact				
Mobility				
Hydration				
Weight/Condition				
Toileting				
Rest				
Your Thoughts				
				Today's Score

<10 = Your pet's quality of life is likely within an acceptable range. Keep monitoring for change or deterioration in your pet's condition.	10 – 20 = There are some causes for concern and your vet may be able to suggest interventions that could improve your pet's quality of life.	20 – 25 = Your pet appears to be suffering and quality of life is poor. Discuss these results with your vet as soon as possible.
---	---	---

Weekly Diary

	Pain	Appetite	Demeanour	Mobility	Hydration	Weight	Toileting	Rest	Tot	Notes
Mon										
Tues										
Wed										
Thur										
Fri										
Sat										
Sun										

QUALITY

OF LIFE ASSESSMENT FORM

Monthly Diary

Month Of : _____						
Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
Average Score For This Month:						

For additional copies of this quality of life assessment form please contact Sunset Vets Palliative and End of Life Care.

info@sunsetvets.com.au
1800 368 763

www.sunsetvets.com.au | www.facebook.com/sunsetvets