**Quality of Life Assessment Scale**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Category** | **Questions to ask yourself** | **Score** | **Score** | **Score** |
| **Hurt**0 = very painful 10 = pain-free | - Is your cat experiencing laboured breathing? (Using their stomach to breathe, open-mouth breathing, breathing more quickly than normal, etc)- Is your cat vocalizing more frequently, becoming irritated when touched or purring non-stop? (Cats will sometimes purr excessively to soothe themselves)- Is your cat hiding or avoiding interaction with the family, changing their litterbox habits or no longer able to jump up to their favourite places?  |  |  |  |
| **Hunger**0 = not eating at all 10 = eating well | - Is your cat eating? Are they eating as much or almost as much as they used to? - Does hand feeding and offering different flavoured foods encourage them to eat?- Is your pet continuing to lose more and more weight? |  |  |  |
| **Hydration**0 = dehydrated10 = well hydrated | - Is your cat’s fluid intake sufficient? A good amount to aim for is 10 mL (or 2 teaspoons) per pound per day. - Hydration can be measured by pulling up on the skin between the shoulder blades – if the skin “tents” instead of returning to its normal position, this is a sign of dehydration. - Subcutaneous fluids (fluids given under the skin) can be used long term to help maintain your cat’s hydration.  |  |  |  |
| **Hygiene**0 = soiled10 = very clean | - Is your cat clean and dry with no matts in their fur or soiling from their eliminations? - Can they use their litterbox normally? Would a shallower pan make it easier for them?- Check your pet for pressure sores and wounds daily. |  |  |  |
| **Happiness**0 = depressed10 = joyful and playful | - Does your cat express joy and interest? Are they responsive to the family greeting them and petting them? Do they still want to sit on your lap, play with toys and catnip, etc?- Does your cat seem depressed, lonely, anxious or bored?- If your cat’s mobility is compromised, can their bed be moved close to the family’s activities to avoid isolation?  |  |  |  |
| **Mobility**0 = non-mobile10 = normal mobility | - Can your cat get up and move around on their own?- Is your cat having seizures or stumbling?- If your cat has limited mobility but is still alert and responsive, can the family help by assisting them to the litterbox and providing consistent nursing care?  |  |  |  |
| **More good days than bad days**0= only bad10 = only good | When bad days outnumber good days, your cat’s quality of life is compromised. When a healthy human-animal bond is no longer possible or if your cat is experiencing unresponsive suffering, it is time to make a decision about euthanasia.  |  |  |  |

Making end of life decisions for your pet is difficult, whether they have a terminal illness, chronic pain or other condition. This scale can help you objectively assess your cat’s quality of life to help you make decisions about when it may be time to euthanize your beloved friend. *Please grade your cat between 0-10 in each of the following categories.* This can be done as often as every few days to every few weeks, depending on your pet’s condition; we’ve included space to record your assessment three times, but your pet may require more or less than this. A total score of over 35 (a score of 5 or greater in each category) is considered to represent a reasonably good quality of life. Your veterinarian is here to support you through this difficult time and address any questions or concerns you may have – please don’t hesitate to reach out to us.