

## Is it Time to Say Goodbye?

This can be one of the hardest decisions to make as pet owners. Euthanasia is a gift, to help prevent suffering for your furry friend. If you are wondering if it is time to say goodbye, this can help you determine your pet's quality of life.

### Assessing Quality of Life

There are many factors that go into assessing a pet's quality of life. Does your pet have a chronic disease such as liver disease, kidney disease or heart disease? The quality of life can change quickly if they have a terminal disease, and we know the decision to euthanize is very difficult. Friends and family that see your pet frequently or every once in a while, can help you determine how others see your pet. Ask them how your pet looks to them, for example "Does Rocky look like he has lost weight to you?" or "Do you think he looks uncomfortable when he gets up?". Taking photos can help show the changes in your pet as they age. One tool that can help determine quality of life is marking good days vs. bad days on a calendar. Here is a list of some questions to ask yourself to help aid in deciding a good day vs. a bad day.

- Is he/she still doing the things they love?
- Is he/she still spending time with you and family?
- How well is he/she getting around, even with medications?
- What is his/her mental state? (Will discuss this further)
- Is he/she sleeping through the night?
- Is he/she still eating well?
- Does he/she have a good energy level most of the time?
- Was your pet just diagnosed with a disease? How is that progressing?

Determining mental state include pacing, acting confused, being anxious or acting stressed. If you are seeing mental changes in your pet, there are medications we can try and send to help calm an anxious or stressed pet. These medications may also help your pet sleep better. At the end of the month, tallying up all of the marks for good and bad days will help determine your pet's quality of life. If the majority of the month is marked as good, that is reassurance your pet's quality of life is still good. If your calendar has equal good and bad marks, then it may be time to start thinking about quality of life. If at the end of the month the majority of the days are marked bad, then it is time to make the decision about humane euthanasia. What Else I Can Do?

If your pet still has a good quality of life, but is having some bad days. Is your pet struggling with activities or getting up and around, there are things that can be done. Is your pet on joint care chews? Joint care chews are a supplement that helps lubricate the joint spaces. The 2 most important ingredients to look for are glucosamine and chondroitin. Some quality joint care supplements for dogs are,

- Tri-COX chews,

- Dasuquin Advanced,
- Movoflex
- Flexadin chews.

#### Cat joint care recommendations

- Dasuquin Advanced capsules
- Cosequin chews

Not every product works the same on every pet, so you may need try different ones. If the joint supplements are not enough, the next step would be prescription medications. Before starting these types of medications, bloodwork needs to be done to ensure adequate organ function. NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) are a drug class that help relieve pain and inflammation. Bloodwork needs to be done every 3-12 months depending on results. If your pet cannot have NSAIDs, there are other options. Gabapentin (neurontin) is another option. This medication works more on nerve pain. And is safe with doctor assessment on dosing with organ dysfunction. Along with medications, here are some other options,

- If you have slippery floors;3034
- you can lay rugs (ruggable.com)
- Lay yoga mats down
- Get interlocking gym floors
- Elevating food and water bowls
- Boots (ruff wear)
- Toe grips (ortho pet)
- Hold Em Up harnesses
- Ramps
- Show foot (spray on pads for grip)
- PawFriction (put on pads for grip)
- Solensia for cats (injection for arthritic pain)
- Adequan for dogs (injection for arthritic pain)

#### Euthanasia

As pet owners, we want our pets to pass away peacefully at home. Unfortunately, for many of our pets, this does not happen. It is not always peaceful. If your pet has a terminal disease, we encourage humane euthanasia, before symptoms worsen to prevent any suffering. Do you have questions about the process of humane euthanasia? We strive to keep it as calm and pleasant as possible. With all of our euthanasia's, we do pre-medications to help your pet rest comfortably. This helps ensure a peaceful experience for both you and your pet. We offer aftercare cremation for your pet, through Trusted Journey

<https://www.trustedjourney.com/memorial-products/>). You can receive their ashes back or communal cremation. They offer clay paw prints, ink paw prints, and ink nose prints. Other products can be ordered upon request, such as special urns and jewelry. We are here for you during this tough time. And know how difficult this journey can be. Please, feel free to contact us with any questions.