

Quality of Life Scale

Pet caregivers can use this Quality of Life Scale to determine the success of Pawspice care.
Score patients using a scale of: 0 to 10 (10 being ideal).

SCORE	CRITERION
_____	HURT – Adequate pain control & breathing ability is of top concern. Trouble breathing outweighs all concerns. Is the pet's pain well managed? Can the pet breathe properly? Is oxygen supplementation necessary?
0-10	
_____	HUNGER – Is the pet eating enough? Does hand feeding help? Does the pet need a feeding tube?
0-10	
_____	HYDRATION – Is the pet dehydrated? For patients not drinking enough water, use subcutaneous fluids daily or twice daily to supplement fluid intake.
0-10	
_____	HYGIENE – The pet should be brushed and cleaned, particularly after eliminations. Avoid pressure sores with soft bedding and keep all wounds clean.
0-10	
_____	HAPPINESS – Does the pet express joy and interest? Is the pet responsive to family, toys, etc.? Is the pet depressed, lonely, anxious, bored or afraid? Can the pet's bed be moved to be close to family activities?
0-10	
_____	MOBILITY – Can the pet get up without assistance? Does the pet need human or mechanical help (e.g., a cart)? Does the pet feel like going for a walk? Is the pet having seizures or stumbling? (Some caregivers feel euthanasia is preferable to amputation, but an animal with limited mobility yet still alert, happy and responsive can have a good quality of life as long as caregivers are committed to helping their pet.)
0-10	
_____	MORE GOOD DAYS THAN BAD – When bad days outnumber good days, quality of life might be too compromised. When a healthy human-animal bond is no longer possible, the caregiver must be made aware that the end is near. The decision for euthanasia needs to be made if the pet is suffering. If death comes peacefully and painlessly at home, that is okay.
0-10	
_____	A total over 35 points represents acceptable life quality to continue with pet hospice (Pawspice).
TOTAL	

Original concept, *Oncology Outlook*, by Dr. Alice Villalobos, *Quality of Life Scale Helps Make Final Call*, VPN, 09/2004; scale format created for author's book, *Canine and Feline Geriatric Oncology: Honoring the Human-Animal Bond*, Blackwell Publishing, 2007. Revised for the International Veterinary Association of Pain Management (IVAPM) 2011 Palliative Care and Hospice Guidelines. Reprinted with permission from Dr. Alice Villalobos & Wiley-Blackwell.
Alice Villalobos, DVM, DPNAP, a renowned veterinary oncologist, introduced "Pawspice", a quality of life program for terminally ill pets. Pawspice starts at diagnosis and includes symptom management, gentle standard care and transitions into hospice as the pet nears death. Dr. Villalobos developed this scoring system to help family members and veterinary teams assess a pet's life quality.