



Understanding Your Pet's Quality of Life

You Are Not Alone

Facing the possible loss of a beloved pet is incredibly difficult. Many families feel torn between not wanting their pet to suffer and not being ready to say goodbye. If this is where you are, you are not alone.

You may have heard: “You’ll just know when it’s time.”

Unfortunately, it’s often not that simple.

What to Look At

When assessing your pet’s quality of life, consider the following:

Enjoyment – Does your pet still enjoy things like walks, toys, or being with family? Do they still wag their tail?

Mobility – Can they move comfortably and go outside to use the bathroom?

Awareness – Are they alert, or do they seem confused or withdrawn?

Sleep – Are they resting peacefully, or restless and uncomfortable?

Appetite – Are they eating and drinking normally, or losing interest? Often the last thing to go, we do not always consider appetite when making an end-of-life decision.

Hygiene – Are accidents becoming frequent or difficult to manage?

Breathing – Is breathing normal, or labored and uncomfortable?

Pain – Are there signs like panting, restlessness, difficulty moving, or withdrawing?

Anxiety – Do they seem unsettled, stressed, or unable to relax?

Urgent Concerns

Some symptoms may require immediate veterinary attention:

Severe or sudden pain

Difficulty breathing

Extreme distress or inability to settle.

Looking at the Whole Picture

It can help to:

Think through these areas individually

Write down observations

Talk as a family (it's okay to have different perspectives)

Also consider:

Are there more good days than bad days?

Is your pet still able to enjoy life in meaningful ways?

🧠 BUT - How Do *You* Feel?

After reflecting on your pet's condition, ask yourself:

Do I feel reassured—or concerned?

Am I seeing more struggle than comfort?

And just as important:

It is not selfish to feel exhausted, overwhelmed, or heartbroken.

Caring for a declining pet is emotionally and physically demanding.

These feelings are normal—and human. And it is OKAY to say goodbye if it is in the best interest of your pet.

🧩 A Question That May Help

There is no perfect answer, but many families find clarity in asking:

“What feels more difficult right now— saying goodbye, or watching my pet continue to struggle?”

💛 We're Here for You

You don't have to navigate this alone. We are here to support you, answer questions, and help you make the most compassionate decision for your pet.

We will always work together with you and will never recommend or proceed with euthanasia unless it feels appropriate and humane.

You are not alone. We've got you.