



## Is It Time to Consider Pet Hospice or Euthanasia?

### *A Helpful Checklist for Pet Parents*

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When your pet is in the end stage of terminal disease, you may feel emotional and overwhelmed. Being emotionally upset can make it difficult to assess your pet’s state of well-being. Since you are with your pet every day and are very familiar with him/her, it can be hard to truly see the changes in appearance and behavior that are part of your pet’s declining health.

The following checklist is an informal, unscientific tool you can use to help you be as objective as possible about your pet’s condition. It might also be helpful to ask a friend who knows your pet to go through this checklist with you.

- My pet’s quality of life seems to be declining. He/She is losing weight and is sleeping more than usual.
- My pet seems to have a difficult time getting up or laying down.
- My pet no longer seems to enjoy his/her normal activities.
- My pet can no longer maintain his/her normal routines.
- My pet seems to be suffering. His/Her eyes seem vacant, anxious or distant.
- My pet is no longer interested in his/her regular food.
- My pet seems to be in pain. He/She pants, licks, whines/cries frequently.
- My pet’s personality seems to be changing. He/she is unpredictable and sometimes growls, hisses, or nips when touched or approached. I am often worried that this behavior may compromise the safety of people, as well as my other pets.
- My pet has stopped drinking water.
- My pet seems to be incontinent, often peeing or pooping indoors.
- My pet has lost much of his/her personality. He/She is no longer alert, playful, or happy to see me. He/She no longer has much energy, dignity, or interest in living.

Since every pet and every pet parent is different, please decide for yourself which of these “quality of life” indicators might prompt you to consider pet hospice care or euthanasia for your pet. Talk to your veterinarian about the signs and symptoms you observe. Together, you can create the plan that is best for you and your pet.

For more information, visit the Veterinary Wisdom Resource Center at [www.veterinarywisdompetparents.com](http://www.veterinarywisdompetparents.com).

