

Assessing your pet's quality of life

Consider some of the following suggestions to help gain a deeper understanding of your pet's current quality of life.

Create a list of your pet's unique qualities

Your pet is a very special individual with its own special customs. These are a few general ideas to help you get started on your own list:

- **Chasing a ball**
- **Playing with other pets**
- **Greeting you at the door**
- **Playing with toys**
- **Wanting to go for walks**
- **Usual habits like scratching on a post and rubbing your legs or barking at a neighbor**

As your pet's disease progresses and these qualities fade, mark them off the list. Decide early on how many you will allow to go before too much quality diminishes from your pet's day-to-day life.

Keep a good day/bad day calendar

Evaluate what a good day would be for your pet, and also what a bad day looks like. Each evening, recall the day and decide if it was a good or bad day, marking a calendar with a happy face or a sad face. Decide how many bad days in a row occur before quality is compromised. You also can use a marble jar for this same purpose. For each good day, a marble is placed in a jar. For every bad day, a marble is removed from the jar.

Keep a journal

Keep a daily record of events in your and your pet's life. This will help you look back and reflect on changes that occur and how your life is affected.

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