



## *Quality of Life*

When treating aging pets and making end of life decisions, our primary concern is quality of life (QOL). Dogs and cats tend not to make long term plans; they live in the “now”. Prior to offering any treatment recommendation(s), we focus on 5 basic QOL requirements:

1. Eating, drinking, maintaining weight/body condition
2. Breathing & Sleeping comfortably for at least 4 hours at a time
3. Ability to urinate and pass stools
4. Pain control/management
5. Continuation of your pet’s ability to be a social part of the family environment

Our goal is to do our best to maintain these 5 QOL requirements during and after therapy.

For more intensive (i.e. “curative-intent”) treatment options we can accept some side-effects with the goal of extending a patient's QOL once therapy has been instituted/completed. On the other hand, for “palliative” options, our goal is to use treatments to help a patient feel better for the time we have left with them. In “palliative” treatment protocols we accept less negative side-effects. Any negative side-effects observed are expected to be better than if the disease (cancer, heart failure, kidney failure, osteoarthritis) were allowed to progress without therapy.