

Quality of Life Questionnaire

We know that making end of life decisions can be difficult and emotional. Choosing whether, or when, to say goodbye may be the hardest decision you ever have to make regarding your horses' welfare. However, it may be one of the most responsible and compassionate things we can do for our equine. We hope that the following questionnaire will help you determine when it is time to make the right choice for a peaceful passing. Your veterinarian can provide you with medical information and help you fully understand the implications for the horse's future. Your veterinarian can also explain the options and offer comfort and support. But your veterinarian *cannot* make the decision for you.

There are a wide range of circumstances in which euthanasia is a reasonable and responsible choice. Among the most common are these:

- Incurable, progressive, or transmissible disease
- Chronic severe lameness
- Inoperable Colic
- Debilitation in old age
- Severe traumatic injury
- Dangerous behavioral traits
- Undue financial burden of caring for a sick or incapacitated horse
- Undue suffering for any reason

Ambulation

- Can your horse lie down safely, and do they lie down regularly? (At least once every 2-3 days)
 - Do they lie down so much they have pressure sores?
 - Can your horse get up from lying down without assistance?
- Can your horse walk around?
 - Are they able to walk around their stall or paddock safely and voluntarily?
 - If they live in pasture, can they keep up with the herd?
- Can your horse perform basic behaviors, such as picking up and holding all 4 feet for the farrier?

Nutrition

- Does your horse show interest in feed?
- Are they able to chew and swallow the feed you provide?
- Are you able to make the feed changes your horse may need?
- Is your horse able to maintain an appropriate weight/body condition?
- Have you noticed any evidence of progressive and or unresolved weight loss?

Attitude

- What are your horse's three favorite things? Can they still do them safely and as regularly as they would like?
- Does your horse have something they look forward to (besides eating) every day?
- Is your horse in pain?
- Do they need constant medication for comfort? If so, do the medications control the pain adequately?
- Has your trainer/farrier/vet/barn friend noticed a difference in your horse's attitude?

Medical Care

- Can your horse's diagnosis be cured?
 - If it cannot be cured, can it be managed adequately?
 - Can you afford the costs of medications, procedures and/or recheck visits needed to manage the condition?
- Will your horse tolerate the recovery or treatment process?
- Are you able to medicate your horse as frequently as they may need?
- Is your horse able to receive preventative dental & wellness care?
- Are you aware of the cost of euthanasia? How will the remains be handled?

Planning & Preparation

If you and your veterinarian agree that euthanasia is the best choice, it is important to prepare as best you can. If you are able to make the decision in advance rather than in an emergency situation, making prior arrangements will ease the process. These guidelines might help:

- Decide when and where the procedure will be best carried out, bearing in mind that arrangements must be made for removal of the body. Choose what is most comfortable and practical for you, your veterinarian, and your horse.
- If you board your horse, inform the stable manager of the situation.
- Decide whether you wish to be present during the procedure. If you cannot or do not wish to be present, you may want to ask a friend to stand in for you. Decide what is right for you. (If you are unfamiliar with the procedure and are unsure what to expect, discuss it with your veterinarian.)
- Be aware that, for safety reasons, your veterinarian may not allow you to be touching or holding the horse during the procedure. You will, however, be able to touch and be with your horse before and afterward.
- Make arrangements in advance for the removal and disposal of the body. Check with your veterinarian and/or the city or county health department. Many municipalities have ordinances prohibiting or restricting burial. Removal to a rendering facility or pet crematory may be required.
- Explain to members of your family, especially children, in sensitive but honest terms, why the decision was made to euthanize the horse.
- Allow yourself to grieve. Finding a support person to talk with can help you work through this difficult period.
- If the horse is insured, notify the insurance company in advance so that there are no problems with claims. While the veterinarian will provide you with any required documentation, the rest (notification, filing, follow-up, etc.) is your responsibility.

Disposal Services

Shipley & Son: Removal with options of burial at pet cemetery or cremation 513-309-6658

Standard Fertilizer (outside 275 loop): 812-663-8391

Burial on property: Mark Schulte 513-967-3232

We know making the choice to say goodbye to your horse can be difficult to navigate, our team will do all that we can to support you and your equine during this process.