

<b>RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL BELIEFS</b>
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	<b>As death approaches</b>	<b>When death is imminent</b>	<b>Immediately after death</b>	<b>Method of disposal</b>	<b>Funeral customs</b>	<b>Mourning practices</b>
<b>Buddhism</b>	<p>Resuscitation is an acceptable procedure for Buddhists, but some traditions have special needs as death approaches. To assist in the passage to the next rebirth, which is not the same as reincarnation, wholesome acts such as generosity, service, kindness or pleasant thoughts are recalled.</p> <p>The dying person needs peace and quiet to allow for Meditation.</p> <p>A monk or religious teacher should be invited to talk to the dying person and chant passages of scripture.</p>	<p>The ideal way to die in a fully conscious and calm state of mind.</p> <p>Dying Buddhists may request that a monk or nun be present to chant or assist in the passing from this life.</p> <p>If a monk is not available a fellow Buddhist may chant to encourage a peaceful state of mind.</p>	<p>No special requirements relating to the care of the body; Buddhists from different countries have their own traditions.</p> <p>If monks or religious teacher not present, inform the monks of the appropriate school.</p> <p>Because rebirth is a fundamental part of Buddhism, the preparation for death prevails over the rituals associated with death.</p>	<p>There is no one Buddhist death ritual, type of funeral or afterlife requirement.</p> <p>Buddhists choose to bury or cremate according to local traditions.</p> <p>Cremation is often preferred as the body is considered a vehicle that is impermanent.</p> <p>In some traditions it is desirable for the body to remain at the place of death for seven days to allow rebirth to occur.</p>	<p>The funeral usually takes place within 3 -7 days; a service may take place within the house prior to going to the cemetery or crematorium.</p> <p>Monks may be invited to remind the mourners of the impermanence of life.</p> <p>In Tibetan tradition a 'sky burial' is still practised, where the body is dismembered and scattered for vultures to eat.</p>	<p>There is great variation according to the country of origin, e.g. Sri Lankan Buddhist mourners may return to work in three or four days and place no religious restrictions on widows.</p> <p>Some Vietnamese Buddhists have a series of rituals; mourning may last 100 days and mourning for a father or husband may last as long as three years.</p>

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<b>Judaism</b>	<p>A rabbi may be called in to join the dying Jew in prayer and facilitate the recitation of the Confession on a Death Bed.</p> <p>Withdrawing life support after a patient has been certified brain stem dead is a highly controversial area of Jewish law. In all instances, a rabbi should be consulted. Jewish law prevents active euthanasia as human life is considered sacred</p>	<p>The dying person should not be left alone.</p> <p>Jews present should recite psalms and when death occurs, the Declaration of the Faith (Shema).</p> <p>If they are not available, staff are permitted to carry out basic procedures immediately.</p> <p>These include closing the eyes and mouth, with strapping if necessary. Any external catheters and medical equipment attached to the body may be removed and all incisions dressed.</p> <p>It is essential that the body is laid flat, with hands open, arms parallel and close to the body, and the legs stretched straight, and covered with a white sheet.</p>	<p>When a Jewish patient dies, nurses should always try to contact the patient's rabbi or Jewish chaplain designated to the hospital.</p>	<p>The Jewish Burial Society will collect the body and perform a ritual wash before the burial. The burial takes place as soon as possible in simple coffins.</p> <p>If death occurs on the Sabbath or a festival, there is little the Jewish community can do to prepare for a funeral.</p> <p>Judaism does not allow post mortem examinations out of respect for the human body.</p>	<p>It is traditional for relatives or friends to keep vigil by the body and recite prayers, although in Judaism there is no concept of last rites.</p> <p>A Jewish burial should take place as soon as possible after death and arrangements for the release of the body should be made without delay.</p> <p>The service takes place in designated Jewish burial grounds. Prayers are said in a chapel and at the graveside.</p> <p>Some non-orthodox Jewish communities permit cremation.</p>	<p>After burial there are three periods of mourning throughout which designated mourners recite prayers thrice daily and refrain from certain activities.</p> <p>The first week (Shiva) mourners remain at home; thirty days (Shloshim) concludes mourning for all but the children of the deceased who mourn for a year.</p>

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<b>Christianity (Afro-Caribbean)</b>	<p>Visitors are extremely important to the sick and dying, and large numbers of them are seen as a mark of respect. Apart from visit by family members, it is common for the pastor and members of the church or community to visit people in hospital.</p> <p>Nurses should be sensitive to the needs of the patient and his or her visitors, who may wish to pray and sing hymns.</p> <p>Ideally, patients should be allocated a side room so that visitors can conduct a prayer meeting and sing, as this is not feasible on an open ward because of the disruption it would cause.</p>	<p>When appropriate, a priest or minister may be notified.</p> <p>Many Christians will wish to receive Communion (which will include some form of repentance and forgiveness).</p> <p>Prayers of commendation may also be said.</p> <p>Some Christians may wish for prayers and anointing with oil by a minister or priest.</p>	<p>No specific procedures are indicated.</p> <p>Older people are unlikely to agree to a post mortem unless it is a legal requirement.</p>	<p>Burial is generally preferred to cremation.</p>	<p>It is customary for members of the deceased's family to receive visitors from the community every night until after the funeral and for most of the community to attend the funeral as a mark of respect.</p>	<p>There is usually no official mourning period or mourning dress.</p> <p>There may be a memorial service and/or thanksgiving some months after the funeral.</p>

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<b>Christianity (Orthodox)</b>	<p>A very sick person or a member of his or her family may ask a priest to perform one or more of the holy sacraments.</p> <p>By anointing the sick with oil in Christ's name, the priest asks Him to alleviate suffering and heal the person, either in this or eternal life.</p>	<p>The dying person may want to take confession and/or holy communion.</p> <p>These rituals are important preparations for the journey to the next life.</p> <p>In areas with large orthodox communities contacting priests should not be a problem. In areas with a small orthodox community, health care staff should plan ahead.</p>	<p>No specific procedures are indicated.</p>	<p>Cremation is not condemned but it is rare because of the belief in life after death.</p> <p>Traditionally the body is buried complete to await resurrection.</p>		

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<b>Rastafarianism</b>	Rastafarians have a duty to visit the sick, and may do so in large groups, to pray for a gravely ill patient.	As there is no formal structure or hierarchy, someone such as an elder may approach staff to request administering last rites to the dying person.	After death there are no particular requirements and, with the relatives' consent, the body can be prepared in the usual way with the arms placed at the sides.	Burials preferred to cremations.  Some Rastafarians may wish to avoid touching a dead body, as to do so would require them to shave off their hair.	Post mortems, unless ordered by the coroner, are likely to be unacceptable because of their unnatural invasiveness.	
<b>Sikhism</b>	A dying Sikh may receive comfort from reciting hymns from the Sikh holy book.  A relative or any practising Sikh may do so instead.	A Sikh should die with the name of God, Waheguru, (Wonderful Lord) being recited.  Some Sikhs may want to have Amrit, holy water, in the mouth.	Health workers should not trim hair or beard. The body should be covered by plain cloth.  The five Ks Kesh (uncut hair) Kara (a steel bracelet) Kanga (a wooden comb) Kaccha (cotton underwear) Kirpan (sword) should remain on the body.	Cremation as soon as possible.	After a short ceremony at home the body, dressed in the five Ks, is taken to the temple (gurdwara) for a service and then to the crematorium for further prayers.	Mourning last for up to ten days and includes readings from the scriptures attended by relatives and friends. At the conclusion, the eldest son is given a turban as a sign that he is now head of the family.

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<b>Hinduism</b>	<p>Hindus may receive comfort from hymns and readings from the Hindu holy books.</p> <p>The family should be present.</p> <p>Some dying Hindus may wish to lie on the floor.</p> <p>Hindus often wish to die at home</p>	<p>When death is imminent, the patient's family may wish to stay by the bedside and be involved in care.</p> <p>The family may wish to call a Hindu priest (pandit) to perform holy rites.</p> <p>A dying Hindu should be given Ganges water and the sacred Tulsi leaf in the mouth by the relatives. A person should die with the name of God being recited.</p>	<p>The family will usually want to wash the body themselves.</p> <p>If no family is available health workers should wear disposable gloves, close the eyes and straighten the limbs.</p> <p>Jewellery and religious objects should not be removed.</p>	<p>Cremation as soon as possible with the exception of children under three who are buried.</p>	<p>Part of the service takes place at home. The priest (pandit) chants from scriptures and the chief mourner (usually the eldest son) performs the rituals. Mourners walk round the coffin, which is then closed and taken to the crematorium for further prayers.</p>	<p>Mourners and friends return to the deceased's house.</p> <p>In India, the period of mourning and austerity (10 – 16 days) culminates in rituals enabling the dead person's soul to join the ancestors. In Britain, these very important rituals occur soon after the funeral and involve gifts to the priest or to charity. There may be further rituals at one, three, six and twelve months.</p>

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<b>Islam</b>	<p>Dying person may wish to face towards Ka'sbih (south east).</p> <p>Other Muslims, usually family members, join the dying person in prayer and recite verses from the Quran.</p> <p>If there is no next of kin available the Islamic Trust may be contacted on 01702 347265 (Southend)</p>	<p>The Declaration of Faith (Shahada) is said and, if possible, the dying person responds. 'I bear witness that there is no God but Allah and that Muhammad is his Messenger'.</p>	<p>Non-Muslim health workers should ask permission to touch the body, then use disposable gloves.</p> <p>The body must be kept covered at all times.</p>	<p>Always burial, ideally within 24 hours of death. Women are not included at the burial. Male family members and or friends carry the coffin either to the mosque or directly to the cemetery where the funeral prayer is said.</p>	<p>The body is buried in a deep grave facing Mecca. In bigger cities there are special areas for Muslim burials and in some they are allowed to bury the shrouded body without a coffin. In some instances the body may be embalmed and taken back to the country of origin for burial.</p>	<p>Islamic law requires the mourners to be fed for three days. After this the family should officially return to normal.</p>
<b>Jehovah Witness</b>	<p>There are no special rituals or practices for the dying but patients who are ill appreciate a visit from one of their Elders.</p>		<p>Routine last offices procedure is appropriate. There are no religious objections to post mortems or transplants.</p>		<p>May be either buried or cremated depending on family wishes. There are no specified funeral rites, although a simple personal service is likely to be held at the Kingdom Hall.</p>	