

What to Expect During the Dying Process

What to Expect

The following is a list of common signs of the natural dying process. Not all signs happen at the same time and some never happen at all. Every death is as unique as the person who is experiencing it.

1 to 3 months before death

- wanting to be left alone (withdrawing)
- sleeping more
- eating less
- talking less.

1 to 2 weeks before death

- feeling anxious, agitated, restless (uneasy)
- feeling confused
- picking at clothing or blankets
- talking with loved ones who have died
- decrease in blood pressure
- increase or decrease in pulse
- sweating
- changes in breathing
- feeling congested



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HOSPICE &
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- changes in skin coloring
- sleeping more hours during the day
- little or no eating and drinking
- changes in body temperature.

Days or hours before death

- more intense 1-to-2-week signs
- having a surge of energy (a rally)
- further decrease in blood pressure
- irregular breathing (start and stop, labored)
- changes in skin coloring (purple) on hands, knees and feet
- weak, hard-to-find pulse
- half-open glassy or tearing eyes
- decrease in urine
- unable to control urine (incontinence).

Minutes before death

- changes in breathing patterns
- changes in skin coloring
- unable to be woken up.

How to Reach Allina Health Hospice

A hospice nurse is awake and available by phone anytime (24 hours a day, 7 days a week) at 651-635-9173 or 1-800-261-0879, if you have a question or need help right away.



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