



## What will happen?

When someone dies, their body stops working. They stop breathing and their heart stops beating. They may look a bit paler and after a little while their skin may feel cold. When a person dies they don't feel anymore.

After a person dies, we may feel lots of different things. There's no right or wrong way to feel, but it's important to try to talk about your feelings with friends and family, and to ask any questions that you may have.

Losing someone special to us is painful and difficult. You're not alone and people will be around to support you at this time. It's important that you look after yourself and take up helpful support from those around you.



Things won't always be so difficult. You will never forget them, but in time it won't hurt as much as it does today.

Remember all the times that you've shared together and your special memories will last forever.

This has been adapted from a guide developed by the Marie Curie Palliative Care Institute and the Childhood Bereavement Network, United Kingdom.

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This document can be made available in alternative formats on request.

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# Saying goodbye to someone special

A guide for teenagers



You may have already been told that your friend or relative is very ill. The doctors and nurses will do all they can to make sure that they're comfortable and not in any pain, but sadly we can't make them well and we can't make them better.

At this stage in a person's illness, their body doesn't work properly and it begins to close down. We can see that this is happening because people may become a lot sleepier, their breathing can change and they no longer want or need to eat and drink. This means that the person is dying and the doctors and nurses think that this is now happening to your friend or relative.

### What changes will I see?

When a person is dying their breathing may sound noisier. Sometimes people can seem a little bit restless but everyone is different.

You may want to spend time with them. They can still hear you and will know that you're there but they probably won't be able to talk to you. You can talk to them and hold their hand if you want to. Sometimes people decide that they don't want to spend time with their relative at this time and that's okay too.

It's important that you do what you feel is right for you. If you choose not to visit, you may want to send a message, card or letter with a relative or friend who may be visiting.

### How will I feel?

When someone is dying we can feel lots of different things. We may feel very sad or angry that this is happening to us or confused about things around us. Sometimes we don't feel anything for some time and we can feel quite numb. There's no right or wrong way to feel, but it's important that you share your feelings with close friends and relatives who can support you.

If there's anything that you don't understand or that you're worried about, you could talk to a relative or member of staff. They will try to answer your questions and offer you support at this difficult time.

### How long will it take?

Sometimes a person can be very sleepy for a number of days before they die, while other people die more quickly. Everyone is different and sometimes things can change quite quickly. The staff caring for your friend or relative will watch very carefully and adjust their medication to ensure that they're comfortable.

During this time you should still try to eat and drink and talk to your friends, as you would normally do. It's ok to take a break from social media, as sometimes it can be overwhelming if you're dealing with difficult emotions. It's important that you continue to look after yourself.

