

NORTH·LONDON HOSPICE

Registered Charity No. 285300



**When death is close at hand
and what to do afterwards**

Haringey



This booklet helps you to recognise some of the signs that death may be approaching and gives information on what to do when death occurs at home.

Signs of approaching death

Not everyone will display all of these signs but this is often how the body prepares for the final stages of life.

SIGN	ADVICE
Sleeps more and difficult to wake at times.	Plan conversation times for when the person seems more alert.
Loses appetite or have difficulty swallowing. Therefore if they cough or choke frequently please discuss this with your nurse.	Offer small servings of favourite foods or drink without forcing. At this time the body has minimal needs.
Becomes confused about time or may not recognise familiar faces.	Speak calmly. Remind the person of the day, time and who is in the room.

SIGN	ADVICE
<p>Becomes restless, pulls at bedclothes, has visions of people or things that aren't really there. They may develop a fixed stare</p>	<p>Leave a soft light on in the room. Provide reassurance and avoid physical restrictions where possible. Even if the person cannot respond, don't assume they can't hear you - hearing is the last sense to be lost.</p>
<p>Loses control of bowels or bladder.</p>	<p>This does not usually occur until death is close. The amount of urine will decrease or stop as death nears. At home, the District Nurse can advise on how this can be managed.</p>
<p>Secretions collect at the back of the throat and sound like a rattle.</p>	<p>This is because the person cannot swallow saliva but does not mean they are uncomfortable.</p> <p>Turn the person on their side or raise the head of the bed. Sometimes medication can be given to help – ask the nurse or District Nurse.</p>
<p>Arms and legs cool as the circulation slows down. Sometimes one side of the body will be warm and the other cold. Face becomes pale and feet and legs adopt a purple-blue appearance.</p>	<p>Use just enough coverings to keep the person comfortable.</p>
<p>Breathing becomes irregular and even stops for short periods. The pulse becomes fast and irregular.</p>	<p>There is no need to become alarmed about this. It causes no distress to the patient.</p>

When death occurs

- Breathing stops
- Heartbeat and pulse stop
- Eyes may be open or closed
- A 'last sigh' or gurgling sound may be heard
- There is no sign of life

Try not to call 999 for an ambulance. Call your GP's surgery and a doctor will come to certify the death and support you. They will also remove any medical equipment from the patient. (If the patient has not seen a doctor in person or by video consultation the 28 days prior to death, the Medical Certificate of the Cause of Death (MCCD) can still be issued but the death must be referred to the coroner)

If you are uncertain what to do, call your District Nurse or North London Hospice.

You may feel shocked or numb when the person has died regardless of how well prepared you were. Contact people you might like to have around you if you feel this is helpful.

These may include people known as "Death Doula's" who are trained to support dying people and their families.

This might be helpful if one has previously been involved. Don't feel you have to do anything. You can just sit with the person's body for a while.

You may experience different emotions at this time.

Caring for the body:

You may want to help wash and clothe (lay out) the person's body. At home if you contact the undertaker they will show you what to do. Death Doula's (End of Life Doula UK www.eol-doula.uk/) can also assist with this process if they have been previously known to the person and family, and are present at this time.

Cultural considerations:

Different religions have different processes and rituals however it may involve washing the and carefully drying the body, closing the eyelids, and making sure the mouth is supported and closed. The person's hair is tidied but also might be washed.

When you are ready, and the death has been verified contact a funeral director of your choice. There is no rush to do this if you wish to spend some time with the person who has died. Many people like to sit for a period of time and talk or hold their hand.

Funeral directors are listed

in the telephone directory or on the internet. The National Association of Funeral Directors (www.nafd.org.uk/ tel: 0845 230 1343) or The National Society of Allied and Independent Funeral Directors (www.saif.org.uk tel: 01279 726777) can give you telephone numbers of those in your area.

You may want to inform the District Nurse, Care Agency and North London Hospice.

At this time you may be feeling very tired and emotional. You may feel unwell or have a headache. Try to take care of yourself as your wellbeing is important.





How to register a death

The registration of death must take place at the office covering the area in which the death occurred, within 5 days (unless the registrar says you can take longer than this).

The following people are able to register the death:

- A relative, usually the closest one
- Someone who was present at the death
- Someone who is arranging the funeral with the undertaker

In order to register the death, the registrar will need the following information about the deceased:

- Medical certificate showing cause of death
- Date and place of death
- Full name and where applicable, maiden name
- Date and place of birth
- Full name of spouse (whether deceased or living)
- Their usual address
- Occupation (of the deceased and their husband, wife or civil partner (if applicable))
- Date of birth of their surviving husband, wife or civil partner (if applicable)
- If the deceased was getting a pension or benefits from the government

It is helpful but not essential to take the deceased's

- Birth certificate
- NHS medical card
- Passport
- Marriage or civil partnership certificate (if applicable)

The registrar will charge a fee for each copy of the death certificate. You might need several copies - for the will to be carried out, any pension claims, insurance policies etc. You may want to purchase more copies of the death certificate at this time, as the price increases considerably if you need more later on.

For more information, go to www.gov.uk/after-a-death or you can call **North London Hospice** on **020 8343 8841**.



Tell Us Once

This service allows you to inform local and central government services, (such as pensions, benefits etc), of the death in one go, rather than contacting them all individually. If you want to use this service, please mention it when making your appointment to see the registrar.

If a death takes place within the London Borough of Haringey, contact:

Register Office 020 8489 2605
Civic Centre, Mon-Fri, 9.00am-5.00pm
High Road, Wood Green
London N22 8LE (For sat nav: N22 9SB)

Closed on the first Thursday of every month from 1pm

To avoid delays, it is recommended that you make an appointment. It is possible to walk in without an appointment but you must arrive before 3pm and be prepared to wait.

For cultural reasons, if a weekend or Bank Holiday funeral is required, contact the out-of-hours number **020 8489 0000**. You will be given contact details for the on-call registrar.

For more information see www.haringey.gov.uk



Flowers or no flowers at the funeral?

We know you are presently experiencing a very difficult time but have you considered asking friends and/or relatives to make a donation towards the work of the Hospice rather than send flowers to the funeral?

Perhaps you may like to have flowers from immediate family members only and ask others to make a donation instead.

Donations to the Hospice are very much appreciated and will help us continue our care in the future.

We are a registered charity and it costs more than £13 million every year to fund our services. Although we receive some government funding, we rely on donations and legacies to meet the cost of providing

over two thirds of our care.

To help you, we can give you donation envelopes to distribute to your friends and family. We can also provide your place of worship or crematorium with a notice acknowledging that donations are being given in lieu of flowers. This can be displayed wherever you decide is best.

Please contact the **Fundraising Team** on **020 8446 2288** if you would like some envelopes and/or an acknowledgement notice or require any further information.

Cheques should be made payable to North London Hospice.

Our bereavement care

Bereavement support is available for family and friends of people who have died in the care of North London Hospice. Grief is normal after bereavement and many people manage with the support of family and friends. Some people find it helpful to meet with others who have been bereaved or to talk to someone one-to-one, to review and reflect upon their experience of loss.

We offer:

- one-to-one support
- group meetings with others in a similar position
- Ceremony of Remembrance, to honour the person you have lost

Bereavement support is provided by trained volunteers and takes place at our Finchley or Winchmore Hill sites. All personal information is treated confidentially.

If you would like some bereavement support, please contact the Bereavement Support Service

Telephone: 020 8343 6819

E-mail: nlhbereavement@northlondonhospice.co.uk

Approximately four to six weeks after your loss, we will contact you by letter or telephone with more information. Please let us know if you change your address, phone number or email details.

How can you support the Hospice

We are a registered charity and it costs more than £13 million every year to fund our services. Although we receive some government funding, we rely on donations and legacies to meet the cost of providing over two thirds of our care.

- Make a donation – send a cheque (payable to North London Hospice), set up a direct debit or donate online at www.northlondonhospice.org
- Sponsor our annual in memory events – **Light Up A Life** in November and **Sow A Special Sunflower** in June
- Remember us in your will
- Choose us as your charity when taking part in sponsored events such as marathons and walks. Come to a Hospice event or hold an event for us eg: quiz, coffee morning etc
- Take items such as books, bric-a-brac, clothing, jewellery etc to our charity shops (addresses overleaf) and maybe find a bargain while you're there. We can collect larger items and furniture – call **020 8343 6813**
- Become a volunteer at the Hospice, in one of our shops or at fundraising events
- Tell your family, friends and neighbours how they can help us too

Under legitimate interest of The General Data Protection Regulations (2018), we may write to you to tell you about our activities including our In-Memory events.

If you do not wish to receive this information, please call the **Fundraising Department** on **020 8446 2288** or email fundraising@northlondonhospice.co.uk

NORTH LONDON HOSPICE SHOPS



Crouch End

020 8340 3269
21 Topsfield Parade, London, N8 8TP

East Finchley

020 8883 6493
123 High Road, London, N2 8AG

Enfield Town

020 8366 1297
60 Church Street, Enfield, EN2 6AX

Finchley Central

020 8349 0290
15 Ballards Lane, London, N3 1UX

Golders Green

020 8731 7807
41 Golders Green Road, London,
NW11 8EE

High Barnet

020 8441 3325
94 High Street, Barnet, EN5 5SN

High Barnet Furniture Shop

020 3137 2326
120 High Street, London, EN5 5XQ

Mill Hill

020 8959 3162
18 The Broadway, London, NW7 3LL

Muswell Hill

020 8444 8131
44 Fortis Green Road, London, N10 3HN

New Barnet

020 8440 8424
63 East Barnet Road, Barnet, EN4 8RW

North Finchley

020 8445 5148
724 High Road, London, N12 9QD

North Finchley Furniture Shop

020 8343 6814
987 High Road, London, N12 8QR

Palmers Green

020 8447 8884
377 Green Lanes, London, N13 4JG

Southgate

020 8886 4342
71 Chase Side, London, N14 5BU

Turnpike Lane

020 8889 0660
19 High Road, London, N22 6BH

Whetstone

020 8343 9888
1297 High Road, London, N20 9HX

Winchmore Hill

020 8360 5220
743 Green Lanes, London, N21 3RX

Wood Green

020 8365 8622
212 High Road, London, N22 8HH

Useful telephone numbers:

GP: _____

District Nurse: _____

North London Hospice: **020 8343 8841**

NLH out of hours number: **07957 588273**

You will hear a recorded message. When it finishes, please leave the **PATIENT's name and telephone number**. If you do not hear from us within 15 minutes, call **020 8343 8841**.

NORTH·LONDON
HOSPICE

**Serving the Boroughs of Barnet,
Enfield and Haringey**

North London Hospice

47 Woodside Avenue,
London N12 8TT (For Sat Nav use N12 8TF)

For all patient related enquiries tel: 020 8343 8841 (First Contact team)

All other enquiries tel: 020 8343 6806

Fax: 020 8343 7672

Email: nlh@northlondonhospice.co.uk

www.northlondonhospice.org



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