

The End of life



“ How people die
remains in the
memory of those
who live on. ”

- Cicely Saunders
(Founder of Hospice
Movement)

Information for family
and friends

www.thefed.org.uk

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The following information is provided for family and friends who may have questions about the possible signs and symptoms of a person who is dying and how to address their care needs.

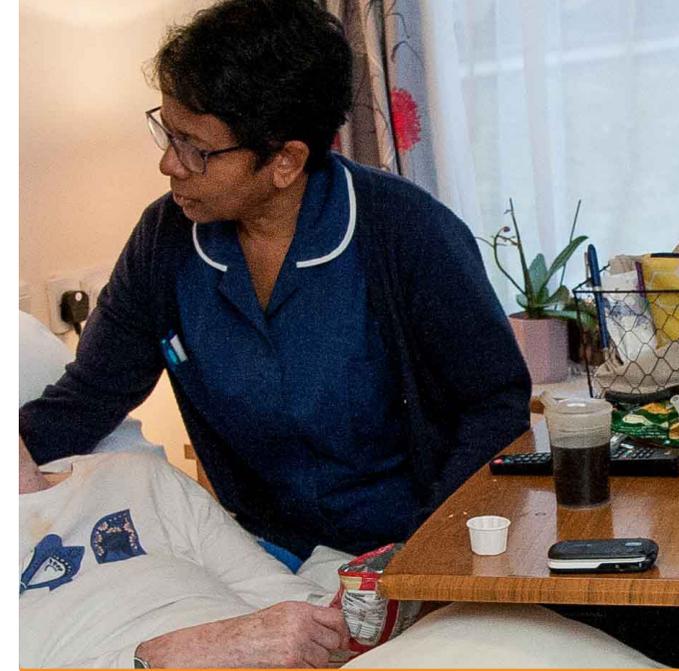


Signs that the person may be dying and how to respond to their needs

- **Vision**
Vision may blur and fail.
- **Hearing**
Hearing is one of the last functions lost. Many hear until the moment of death. Even if unconscious, they may be able to hear.
- **Speech**
Speech may become difficult. It may be hard to understand the person. Anticipate their needs. Continue to talk to the person.
- **Mouth care**
Frequent mouth care may be needed as death approaches and the person is unable to drink.

- **Change in Body Temperature**
The person's temperature may rise as circulation fails. Perspiration increases.
- **Elimination**
The person may become incontinent of urine and faeces.

Incontinence pads may be used. Some people may have constipation or urinary retention. Enemas or urinary catheters may have to be used.
- **Positioning and Comfort**
Regular changes of position may promote comfort.
- **Surroundings**
The person's room should be as pleasant as possible.



Clinical signs and symptoms of death

The following information is provided for family and friends who may wish to know what clinical signs the staff will be observing towards the end-of-life.

- Blood circulation slows
- Extremities feel cold
- Face becomes pale
- Skin becomes mottled
- Respiration becomes slower
- Pulse may be rapid, irregular or weak

At the time of death:

- Respiration ceases
- No pulse is palpable
- Elimination of urine or faeces may occur