

Dying is different for every person and for every whānau. There is no right way to feel and it is important to do whatever feels right during this time.

How will I know that death has occurred?

At the time of death the person will no longer breathe or move, their eyes may be open or closed, and their jaw will relax. The colour of their skin will become paler and feel cooler.

You are likely to feel shocked even if you were well prepared and had been expecting your loved one to die. You may go through many different feelings and emotions after a person has died, even in the first few minutes and hours. There is no right or wrong way to feel or react.

What do I do now?

Take as much time as you need to say your goodbyes. If you are alone at this time, you may want to ask a relative or friend, or a faith/spiritual leader to come and support you.

You do **not** have to call an ambulance or the police. It is helpful to note the time of death. There may be whānau and friends to inform; you may want to ask others to make these phone calls for you.

Contact Hospice to let them know your loved one has died. They can advise you on what to do next if you wish. You will need to obtain a medical certificate for cause of death from your GP; this can wait until morning if your loved one died overnight.

It is often possible for your loved one to stay at home for a length of time to allow friends and relatives to say their goodbyes if this is your wish. Sit with your loved one as long as you need to; it's also OK not to do this.

Turn off room heaters and electric blankets and keep the room as cool as possible. This is particularly important if the person is not to be embalmed.

Some families like to wash their loved one, tidy their hair, and replace any dentures they might usually wear. If this is not possible, place the dentures in a container and ensure the funeral director receives them. If you prefer, you can ask a funeral director to wash and dress your loved one.

Equipment

Equipment such as a syringe driver can be switched off. We can collect this at a time convenient to you. We will ensure any other equipment is collected at a later date.

Funeral arrangements

If you are using a funeral director, you don't need to contact them immediately. You will need to advise them as to the choice of cremation or burial. The funeral director will arrange with you to collect your loved one at a time that is right for you. They are available 24/7.

Returning medications

It is important that any medicines are disposed of safely by returning them to a pharmacy.

Other people you may also need to contact over the next few days

- ◆ The deceased person's solicitor or executor of the will
- ◆ A priest, vicar, minister (if applicable)
- ◆ Work and income (WINZ) if the person was receiving a benefit
- ◆ Social services e.g. home help, personal carers
- ◆ Inland revenue (IRD)
- ◆ Any other insurance companies the person may have been using e.g. home and contents insurance or health insurance
- ◆ The deceased person's power/phone/gas companies (if their name is on the bill)

Getting in Touch

If you need any further information or have

any questions please contact

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Dying at Home

This pamphlet gives practical advice about what to do at the time of death and what follows

Mōku anō ēnei rā te rā ka hekeheke;

He rākau ka hinga ki te mano wai

Let these few days with the declining sun,

be for me; a tree falling into deep

running water