

Introduction

There's only one thing guaranteed in life from birth, not that you'll get a great car or a big house, not that you're going to get married nor that you will have a long life, but as soon as you're born you are guaranteed **death**. Death is common in people of all backgrounds so the events proceeding death should be known by all.

Procedures prior to death

A person upon whom the signs of death are visible is called a **MUHTADHAR**.

Visible signs of death are:

- The breathing becomes rapid
- The knees become so weak that they cannot move
- The nose becomes bent
- The temples subside

If you witness the above mentioned signs, do the following immediately :

- Let the dying person lie on his/her right side facing the Qiblah.
- Or he/she can be position to lie on their back with their feet towards the Qiblah and head slightly raised so that it faces the Qiblah, however if moving the Muhtadar causes any discomfort then leave him/her in any convenient position.
- The clothing and bed linen must be clean.
- Be particular to rid the room of all photos and pictures of living objects.
- It's desirable to use a permitted aromatic such as Lobaan (Frankincense) etc. in the room for fragrance.
- Anyone in the state of impurity, menstrual bleeding or post-natal bleeding should preferably leave the room.

At this stage the recital of Surah Yasin (Surah 36) , Surah Ar Ra'd (Surah 13) and Sura Baqarah (Surah 2) is recommended to ease the departure of the soul.

Talqeen should be made.

Talqeen is to remind the dying of the shahadah. The Shahadah is as follows:

لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ مُحَمَّدٌ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ
La ilaha illa-llah, Muhammadu-rasulu-llah

There is no one worthy of worship besides Allah, Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah.

This should be read before the dying person takes his/her last breath so that the last and final words uttered by the dying person is the Kalimah.

The Muhtadar must not be instructed or ordered to read the shahada, however, he/she must be gently persuaded to read it by continuously reciting it audibly in their presence.

If the dying person recites the Kalimah, then Talqeen will no longer be continued unless the dying person engaged in any worldly conversation after reciting the Kalimah which would necessitate the repeating of the Talqeen procedure.

AFTER DEATH

Immediately:

1. Contact the family doctor
2. Inform the local undertaker/funeral directors
3. Inform the Imam of the local Masjid (for ghusl and janazah prayer)
4. Inform close relatives

When a death occurs at home and the cause of death is known:

1. Immediately contact the family doctor and await to receive a medical certificate.
2. Inform the local undertaker that a medical certificate has been issued. He will advise the time and place of burial and take the body for ghusl.
3. A close relative should take the medical certificate to the registrar of births and deaths of the district or borough.

Information that should be available

1. Deceased person's NHS medical card (if available)
2. The date and place of death
3. Deceased person's usual address.
4. Deceased person's date of birth, town and country
5. Occupation
6. Date of birth of widow or widower

Registrar will issue two free certificates

A) Certificate of Disposal

Should be given to the undertakers as an authorization for burial

B) Certificate of registration of death

This is for social security purposes and for estate administration etc. Take it to the local social security office if you wish to claim death grant or widows benefits.

During public holidays or after office hours the certificate of disposal can be obtained from the registrar of death from his home. This service is only available in the event of an emergency i.e. if burial needs to take place and offices are closed.

When a death occurs at home and the cause of death is unknown:

Where the doctor is unable to certify the cause of death he will report the death to the police who in turn will inform the coroner (doctor or lawyer responsible for investigating certain death)

The matter will be referred to the coroner if death occurs in any of the following circumstances

1. If the deceased person was not attended by a doctor during his last illness or within 14 days of death
2. If the case of death is uncertain
3. If death is sudden, violent or caused by an accident
4. If death was caused by industrial disease.

The CORONER

1. The coroner will probably arrange for a post-mortem examination of the body. The consent of the relatives is not needed for this but they can choose a doctor to be present. The main purpose for carrying out the post-mortem is to ascertain the cause of death.
In most circumstances family members have the option of opting for a scan (at a cost) instead of a post-mortem.
2. The coroner's office will issue a pink form if the post-mortem shows that death was due to natural causes. You must take the pink notice to the registrar of deaths to obtain a certificate of disposal and a certificate of registration of death.
3. The rest of the procedure are exactly the same for burial arrangements
4. If after the post-mortem examination, the cause of death is uncertain or was due to an accident, violence, or industrial disease then an inquest will be held.

An Inquest: an inquiry into the medical cause and circumstance of death. It is held in public and is sometimes with a jury. It is up to the coroner how to organize the inquiry.

PRACTICAL TASKS IMMEDIATELY AFTER DEATH

1. As soon as a person dies their eyes should be gently closed.
when closing the eyes the following Dua can be read:

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ وَعَلَىٰ مِلَّةِ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ

BISMILLAAHI WA `ALAA MILLATI RASOOLILLAHI

In the name of Allah and upon the creed of Rasulallah (Sallallahu alaihi wa sallam)

2. Gently press the chin upward while holding the top of the head.
Then place a strip of fabric under the chin and around the head, tying it firmly at the top.
3. Remove any jewellery such as rings, necklaces, bracelets and nose studs. (It is especially important to remove rings before swelling occurs).
4. Straighten the limbs carefully and gently. If they will not straighten (i.e. due to a stroke) do not force them, as this could cause breakage.
5. Place the toes together and bind the ankles carefully.
6. Do not cut nails or remove unwanted hair from the dead body.
7. Until the *GHUSL* (bathing of the deceased) has not been completed, the body should be covered by a *tahir* (clean) sheet. The one who does this should read:

Note: It is *makruh* (disliked) to recite the *Holy Qur'an* near the deceased person's body during the period between death and the *ghusl* (bath).

All the individuals of the deceased's family may read: -

اللَّهُمَّ اغْفِرْ لِي وَلَهُ وَأَعْقِبْنِي مِنْهُ عُقْبًا حَسَنًا

ALLAHUMMAGHFIR LI WA LAHU WA A'QIBNI MINHU UQBAN HASANAN

O Allah! Forgive me and him and grant me a good reward after him.

Those who are grieved by this demise may read:-

إِنَّا لِلَّهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

INNA LILLAHI WA INNAA ILAYHI RAAJI'OON

To Allah do we belong and to Him shall we return.

اللَّهُمَّ اجْرُنِي فِي مُصِيبَتِي وَاخْلُفْ لِي خَيْرًا مِنْهَا

**ALLAHUMMA'JURNI FI MUSIBATI
WA KHLUF LI KHAYRAM MINHAA**

O Allah! Reward me in my affliction and reciprocate me with (something) better than this.