



HEALTH ASSOCIATES®

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## Comforting Advice for Coping with Grief



The death of someone you love can be one of life's most difficult challenges. Understanding the process of grief and knowing some of what to expect may help.

Grief affects people in many ways. You may feel angry, anxious, guilty, sad—or all of those by turns. Often, the first reaction to the death is to feel numb or shocked. You may have difficulty concentrating or lose interest in enjoyable activities. Physically, you may feel tired, have trouble sleeping, lose your appetite, or even become ill.

### Caring for Yourself Is Important

- Give yourself permission to feel however you are feeling.
- Try to keep up with daily tasks to avoid feeling overwhelmed.
- Talk with others about your feelings.
- Get enough sleep, exercise, and eat a healthy diet.
- Avoid alcohol, which can make you feel worse.

### Adjustment Takes Time

The period of time following a death often holds many changes. Grieving is a process of accepting your loss and adjusting to those changes. That can take months, or even years.

While mourning a loss takes time, if you're not feeling any better in even small ways several weeks after the death, you may need help. Other warning signs that you're having trouble getting through the grief process include:

- Ongoing difficulty with eating or sleeping
- Avoiding any reminders of the loved one who passed away
- Constantly thinking about the person
- Relying on drugs or alcohol to cope
- Feeling alone or detached from others

Talking with your health care provider or a counselor can help if you're having difficulty coping with your loss. Grief support groups led by mental health professionals can also provide a place to talk about your feelings.