

Mourning and Grief Support

- At the time of death always expect the nearest family members, specially women to weep loudly as an expression of grief.
- The body should be cremated within twenty-four hours. However, this is always not possible due to:
 - Scheduling a funeral service may take time.
 - The priest may not be available on a short notice.
 - Some waiting time may be required for close relatives to arrive before funeral service.
 - If organ donation is permitted, allow additional time.
- Appropriate ways to support the bereaved:
 - Visit the grief-stricken family and offer any kind of help to the family, such as, bringing cooked food, buying urgent needs, etc.
 - Hug the bereaved family members. **Note:** Hindu tradition generally does not allow hugging between opposite genders.
 - Offer eulogy during funeral service, if you knew the deceased person well.
 - At the end of the service, the priest or the family may ask guests to offer their last respect to the deceased. This may involve placing a flower near the feet of the body laid in an open casket for viewing. The body is cremated as soon as possible after the funeral service.
- Post Funeral Service (*Shraddha*)
 - The relatives of the dead person are 'impure' (*Asauch*) for ten days.
 - During this time the bereaved family sing devotional songs with friends and relatives, do not receive or give any gifts and eat simple food. Male members do not shave, or cut hair.
 - After ten days (twelve days in some traditions) a ceremony, called '*shraddha*', is performed by the family (generally by the son) with the help of a priest to help the departed soul rest in peace.
- Anniversary Ritual (*Tarpan*): Each year in autumn, the living sons in many Hindu families give oblation of water to the ancestors of three generations as an act of remembrance and performed to satisfy the departed ancestors.