

# Following the Loss of a Loved One



The Smarter Choice for Care



**Middlesex  
Health**

## Following the loss of a loved one...

... our worlds can change. Every death creates its own challenges, unique to each survivor. Each of us deals with grief and loss differently—there is no one right way to grieve.

With the death of a loved one who has been ill for a long time and whose death was expected, we might feel that we are prepared for the loss. However, at the time of the death, our emotions may surprise us.

If death is sudden and unexpected, we may have intense feelings of shock, anger, or disbelief, or we may feel numb. We may question the fairness of life, our spiritual beliefs, or even our own identity. We often ask why, and feel confused and frustrated, as we struggle to understand. Sudden death may bring on grief that is made deeper because we cannot say good-bye, or feel we have “unfinished business.” Perhaps words were never shared because there was never time in our day-to-day lives. If the death is traumatic, so too can be the grieving process.

***The loss of any loved one can have a profound effect that requires a period of mourning, adjustment and extra support.***

Whatever your feelings, accept them as your own, and take time to understand them. You do not have to travel this road alone. There are ways to get through these challenging times with the help of others—friends, family or professional counselors—if your grief becomes overwhelming.

## When you get home...

1. Contact those who you feel need to know and will be emotionally supportive of you—family, friends, clergy or professional counselor.
2. Allow others to help with phone calls, arrangements to be made or household tasks.
3. Notify your loved one’s employer, and arrange for time off with your own employer.
4. Notify the school of any children affected by the loss. Schools can often provide age-appropriate support to children as they go through their own grief. A very useful service for children in Connecticut is The Cove.\* (details on back)
5. Be aware of the wishes in the person’s Last Will & Testament, and be sure the Executor of the Will is notified.

## Following the funeral...

The Executor of the Will should:

1. Contact Probate Court to notify them of the death and the Will.
2. Notify the insurance company(s) and those named on the insurance policy(s).
3. Bring a copy of the death certificate to the bank(s) and notify creditors to discuss financial matters.
4. Talk to an attorney, if legal advice and direction are needed.

## Take time for yourself and your grief...

The task of grieving is hard work. You need to be good to yourself and give yourself the time to grieve. The amount of time needed is different for every person.

It is best not to make any major decisions, such as selling your home or changing jobs, for at least a year. As time moves on, you will be better able to make important decisions about your life and your future.

As you begin your journey of grieving, you may find comfort in knowing that others have walked this path and have survived. You, too, will survive this difficult time, at your own pace. Remember to be gentle with yourself. You may be surprised to find, having walked this path of grief, that you emerge a stronger and more resilient person.



Middlesex Health staff is here to assist you during this time of transition and grief. Please feel free to contact us.

**Middlesex Health**

860-358-6000

**Critical Care Unit**

860-358-8300

**Comfort Care Unit**

860-358-6100

**Spiritual Care**

860-358-6725

**Hospice Program**

860-358-5700

**Social Work**

860-358-6162

**Hospice Bereavement**

860-358-6091

**Customer Service**

860-358-4870

For information on bereavement support groups, contact Spiritual Care or Hospice Bereavement.

To find a grief counselor in your area, visit [psychologytoday.com](http://psychologytoday.com) or call 2-1-1. If your loved one was a veteran, visit [opm.gov](http://opm.gov) or [cem.va.gov](http://cem.va.gov). If your loved one is a child, contact The Cove Center for Grieving Children at 1-800-750-2683 or visit [covect.org](http://covect.org).

28 Crescent Street  
Middletown, CT 06457  
Phone: 860-358-6000  
[www.MiddlesexHealth.org](http://www.MiddlesexHealth.org)