

# Bereavement Support throughout Covid-19

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Most people experience grief when they lose something or someone important to them. If these feelings are affecting your life, there are things you can try that may help. Support is also available if you're finding it hard to cope with stress, anxiety or depression. If you are not sure how you feeling in response to a bereavement, try the **NHS Mood Self-Assessment Tool** at the link below:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mood-self-assessment/>

Bereavement, grief and loss can cause many different symptoms and they affect people in different ways. There's no right or wrong way to feel. As well as bereavement, there are other types of loss you may experience such as the end of a relationship or losing a job or home.

Some of the most common symptoms include:

- **shock and numbness** – this is usually the first reaction to loss, and people often talk about "being in a daze"
- **an overwhelming sadness**, with lots of crying
- **tiredness** or exhaustion
- **anger** – towards the person you've lost or the reason for your loss
- **guilt** – for example, guilt about feeling angry, about something you said or did not say, or not being able to stop your loved one dying

These feelings may not be there all the time and powerful feelings may appear unexpectedly. It's not always easy to recognise when bereavement, grief or loss are the reason you're acting or feeling differently.

**Contact your GP if:**

- you're struggling to cope with stress, anxiety or a low mood
- you've had a low mood for more than 2 weeks
- things you're trying yourself are not helping
- you would prefer to get a referral from a GP

You may also want to consider accessing psychological therapies, speak to your GP or for more information on how to access this support.

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# Other Available Support Services

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If you have lost someone close to you to the Coronavirus, attached are some helpful resources that may be able to support you throughout this difficult time.

## Sudden

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**Email:** [suddenhelpline@brake.org.uk](mailto:suddenhelpline@brake.org.uk)

**Website:** <http://www.suddendeath.org/>

People bereaved in sudden or shocking ways often have many needs, including emotional support but help with practical things too. This is why at Sudden we give you a named, qualified, friendly and professional case worker.

In particular, we are here to help during the first days, weeks and months of your bereavement (but call any time after a death). We help you whether the cause of death was an event or an illness, including COVID-19.

To access support you can either send an email or call **0800 2600 400** between 10am and 4pm, Monday to Friday, to talk to your case worker right away. If you are calling outside these hours, talk to our friends at the National Bereavement Partnership between 7am and 10pm on 0800 448 0800 for emotional support.

We can help if someone you love has died in a way that you consider sudden or shocking. Whatever you need, as often as you need, your experienced case worker is waiting for you. They give you:

- **A confidential listening ear to say how you are feeling**, and help you feel safe, supported and connected. Someone to talk to about your feelings, thoughts, and whatever you are going through right now, from day one of your bereavement or at any time afterwards.
- **Access to compassionate help where you live.** We connect you with people who care and can help. You might want to talk to someone in your community and get help with immediate practical needs such as shopping. You might need help because you are feeling ill or need help with caring for someone in your family. We find you that help.
- **Help with pressing problems.** No problem is too big or small for the Sudden team. Whether you need help stopping junk mail arriving, can't understand a will, or are struggling with lack of income, we are here to help, or find someone who can help you better than us.

# National Bereavement Partnership

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Our helpline is a secure cloud based system. Contact can be made phone, SMS, emails and chatrooms.

**Helpline: [0800 448 0800](tel:08004480800)**

The helpline is open 7am - 10pm, seven days a week, to listen to those in need, support them in dealing with their bereavement or offer guidance in dealing with issues relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.

**SMS Helpline: [07860 022 814](tel:07860022814)**

(texts are charged at your standard rate)

**Webchat available: <https://www.nationalbereavementpartnership.org/>**

The National Bereavement Partnership aims to provide information, advice and support to those individuals struggling on a difficult and emotional journey in these unprecedented times. Our helpline volunteers will use their counselling skills and have a listening ear for callers; they will offer information, advice and support with empathy and compassion. Our volunteers have a deep understanding for grief, loss and the very real anxiety surrounding COVID-19. They have the background knowledge and skills to be able to offer an effective, informative and efficient service to callers.

# Cruse Bereavement Care

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## **Cruse National Helpline: 0808 808 1677**

Monday - Friday 9.30am - 5pm

Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 9.30am - 8pm

Weekends 10am - 2pm

## **Cruse WebChat: <https://www.cruse.org.uk/>**

Monday - Friday 9am - 9pm

Grief is a natural process, but it can be devastating. We are here to support you after the death of someone close. It is important that you take care of yourself following a bereavement. One of the most helpful things is to talk about the person who has died and your relationship with them. Who you talk to will depend on you, it may be your family, friends, a faith/spiritual adviser, your GP or a support organisation. Below are some helpful do's and don'ts to consider following a bereavement:

### **Do.....**

- Talk to other people about the person who has died, about your memories and your feelings.
- Look after yourself. Eat properly and try to get enough rest (even if you can't sleep).
- Give yourself time and permission to grieve.
- Seek help and support if you feel you need it.
- Tell people what you need.

### **Don't....**

- Isolate yourself (unless you have to, eg due to illness).
- Keep your emotions bottled up.
- Think you are weak for needing help.
- Feel guilty if you are struggling to cope.
- Rely on drugs or alcohol – the relief will only be temporary.

## **Hope Again**

**Website: <https://www.hopeagain.org.uk/>**

Hope Again is the youth website of Cruse Bereavement Care. It is a safe place where you can learn from other young people, how to cope with grief and feel less alone. By accessing the link below, you will find information about the services Hope Again offers, be provided with a listening ear from other young people and advice for any young person dealing with the loss of a loved one.

# Tyneside and Northumberland Mind

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**Telephone: 0191 477 4545**

**Email: [admin@tynesidemind.org.uk](mailto:admin@tynesidemind.org.uk)**

The Trauma and bereavement intervention counselling service is provided by Tyneside and Northumberland Mind and offers six sessions of telephone counselling for patients who:

- Are aged 16+
- Are living in Northumberland
- Have been bereaved in traumatic circumstances

Or:

- Live or work in Tyneside or Northumberland and work in the care or support industry and have been affected by a Covid-19 death or deaths

Due to the current COVID-19 outbreak, we are temporarily accepting self-referrals. Our referral form is available to download at the bottom of the page and can be returned by email to our secure inbox (email address detailed on our form).

Also, if you live or work in Northumberland and work in the care or support industry and have been affected by a Covid-19 death or deaths we are now able to offer support with a specifically trained trauma counsellor. You can follow [this link](#), or call us on 0191 477 4545 to request a referral.

# Funeral Support

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At the moment, funerals are changing because of the coronavirus. When groups of people come together, there is a risk that they might catch or pass on the coronavirus. Therefore, there are special rules about how many people can come to a funeral and how close they can get to each other. Additionally, funeral services may be shorter and you may have to wait longer than usual to hold a funeral.

Below are some useful links that include up to date guidance and information on holding or attending funerals during the pandemic:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/social-distancing/bereavement-advice-and-support/>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/covid-19-guidance-for-managing-a-funeral-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>

[https://www.cruse.org.uk/sites/default/files/Coronavirus%20factsheet\\_funerals%20v3.pdf](https://www.cruse.org.uk/sites/default/files/Coronavirus%20factsheet_funerals%20v3.pdf)

**Other useful links:**

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/coping-with-bereavement/>

<https://www.cruse.org.uk/get-help/coronavirus-help/coronavirus-useful-links>

<https://www.cruse.org.uk/coronavirus/easy-read-factsheets>