

The Dying Process

One - Three Months Prior

- Withdrawal from the world and people
- Decreased food intake
- Increased sleep
- Going inside self
- Less communication

One - Three Weeks Prior

Mental Changes

- Disorientation
- Agitation
- Restlessness
- Picking at clothing
- Talking with the unseen

Physical Changes

- Decreased blood pressure
- Increased or decreased pulse
- Skin color changes: pale, bluish
- Increase in perspirations (clammy)
- Sleeping but responding
- Complaints of body tired and heavy
- Not eating, taking little fluid
- Body temp: hot, cold
- Decrease in urine output, becomes dark/tea colored
- Urine and/or bowel incontinence

Days or Hours Prior

- Intensification of one to two week's signs
- Surge of energy "rally"
- Decreased blood pressure
- Eyes glassy, tearing, half open
- Irregular breathing; stop, start (Cheyenne Strokes)
- Death Rattle breathing
- Restlessness or no activity
- Purplish, blotchy knees, feet, hands (mottling)
- Pulse weak and hard to find
- Decrease urine output

Minutes Prior

- "Fish out of water" breathing (gasping breath)
- Cannot be awakened

Horizon Health, Inc. Hospice Services

Compassionate care for those diagnosed with a terminal illness.

- Medical care to alleviate symptoms and pain (including medications and medical equipment).
- Consoling about the emotional and spiritual impact of the end-of-life journey.
- Respite care to allow caregivers relief.
- Massage therapy to promote relaxation.
- Bereavement for family.
- Skilled nursing services.
- Licensed Social Worker.
- Clergy.

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