

## Stages of Dying

First: Withdrawing from loved ones and Refusing to eat. Sometimes the person has a sense of waiting for something or someone.

Terminal Agitation (mood changes, delirium, dizziness, sometimes combative)

Last Hurrah: sudden burst of increased energy and reduction in symptoms

1. Seeing or talking to people who are not there. Confusing people who are there with someone else.
2. Mottling, Gray or blue fingernails
3. When heartbeat is 120 beats a minute regularly then death will happen within a few days to week.
4. Breathing patterns (Kussmaul) and moaning (relaxed vocal chords): "Rest in between breaths"
5. Death Rattle - terminal secretions
6. Cheyne Stokes breathing (shortening breaths with pause then big breath) to very shallow breathing or Biot's breathing
7. Spasms. Neck arteries expand
8. Post breathing lucidity

What you can do:

1. Be with the patient mentally wherever they are.
2. Suggested method of Mindfulness whenever possible. Letting go of judgment. Creating space for whatever happens.  
Active meditation includes: Vipassana meditation with Shamatha when focus is needed.  
Tonglen can be useful for short periods.
3. Chapstick for dry lips, Cold cloth for hot forehead, swab for mouth
4. If requested, read from religious texts or play religious recordings
5. Help the patient relax. Reassure them that it is OK to go

**Persons who are dying often want “permission to die” from those they love. Often, they want to be assured of five things:**

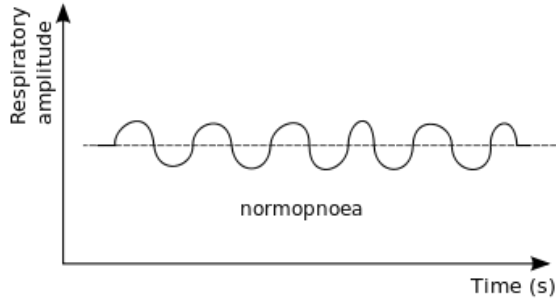
- Things they were once responsible for will be taken care of.
- The survivors will survive without them.
- All is forgiven.
- Their life had meaning.
- They will be remembered.

5. Tell the patient what you're doing if you need to move their body. Identify yourself when you come in the room.

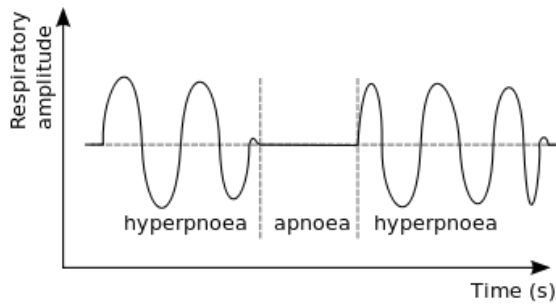
6. If a patient seems to be hanging on they maybe waiting for you to leave in order to die. It might be a good idea to let the person know you are leaving for a cup of coffee so they can have this opportunity

7. Continue talking quietly about good memories and as if the person was present even after the heart has stopped

8. Home Funeral option: National Home Funeral Alliance

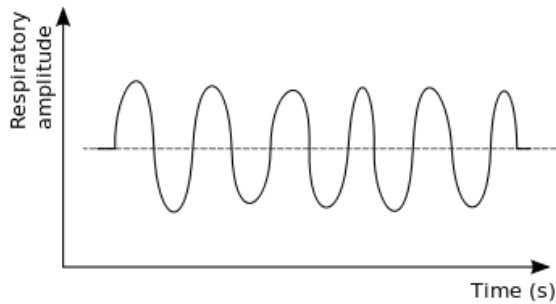


## Normal respiration



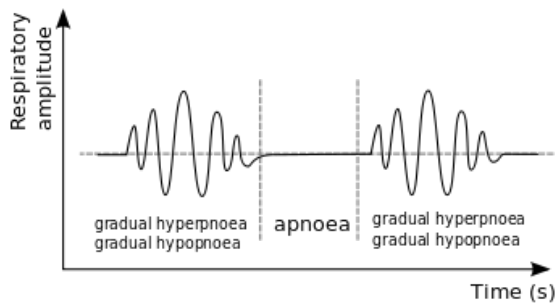
## Biot's respiration

- aka ataxic respiration
- Periodic breathing: hyperpnoea (or normopnoea) and apnoea
  - Poor prognosis
  - Neuron damage



## Kussmaul breathing

- Metabolic acidosis (Diabetes mellitus)
  - Hyperpnoea
- K = Ketones (Diabetic ketoacidosis)  
 U = Uremia  
 S = Sepsis  
 S = Salicylates  
 M = Methanol  
 A = Aldehydes (U)  
 L = Lactic acid/Lactic acidosis



## Cheyne-Stokes respiration

- Periodic breathing: Gradual hyperpnoea/hypopnoea and Apnoea
- Sleep/Hypoxemia/Drugs
- Hypoperfusion of the brain (respiratory center)