

Vital Sign Changes During the Dying Process



Summary

The closer to death the patient becomes, the lower the blood pressure falls. Blood pressure steadily declines, and pulse increases and becomes weaker before decreasing as well. While it is not necessary to take blood pressure and pulse every few minutes, families are often comforted by knowing the results of the readings. Often family members will ask, "How close is he/she? What is the blood pressure?" This may be their way of "tracking" the time left, especially if they have been educated about the effects of the dying process on vital signs. Hospice professionals follow the family's lead in relation to obtaining vital signs and communicating information to them.

