

Home-based after-death care

Traditional healing

Home-based death care is not morbid and it's not scary. It can be a most beautiful time of peace after what may have been a challenging experience.

For centuries, we cared for our persons from before birth to after death in our homes and in our communities. It is a natural process of loving and caring for our tribe and in some cultures, it still remains as current practice.



In Australia, like a lot of the western world, we moved away from this practice in the last century. We have outsourced caring for our deceased to funeral companies where spaces can feel sterile and hard in contrast to comfortable and familiar home environments.

We encourage you to reconnect with the practice of caring for your child in your home. There is some deep healing and acceptance that occurs when you can spend sacred time continuing the care of your child. Bathing them, brushing their hair, dressing them, caring for them as you may have always done...or never had the chance to do.

Equipment

We offer you support and guidance, along with mortuary-level specialised cooling equipment, so you can care for your child.

The purpose of our cooling equipment is to aid in maintaining their physical condition. Our cooling blanket system can be used in any setting and your child will look like they are snuggled in their bed. A quiet compressor by the side of the bed maintains mortuary level of care. We will check in with you regularly to ensure that you feel supported while also being conscious of not interrupting your space and time.

If your child did not die at home, they can be transferred into your home where you can nurture and care for them. Your family and friends, your community can surround you all with much love. You can undertake celebrations, vigils, ceremonies all within the comfort for your environment.

After your child has died at home

What do I do?

- 'Put the kettle on', slow down and sit with your child as long as you need.
- When you are ready, call Palliative Care and they will visit to verify your child's death and arrange the medical certification.
- Call The Willow Tree Foundation on **0413 575 454** when the time feels right. Please allow at least 90 minutes for us to get to your location with the equipment.

What don't I do?

- Don't call an ambulance or the police - there is no need for their involvement in an expected death.
- Don't feel rushed - there is no hurry and no-one should push you to do anything you're not comfortable with.

Body care

- Wash and dress your child.
- Roll up a towel under the chin to close mouth.
- Place an ice pack on their stomach, underneath their neck, and under lower back if possible.
- Feel comfortable to touch and hold them, lie down with them.
- When you aren't with your child, cover their face to deter flies and insects.

Questions?

Please talk with us and we would be happy to talk with you to determine how you can be best supported.



© The Willow Tree Foundation 2021

147 Christmas Street, Fairfield VIC 3078 (by appointment)

www.thewillowtree.org.au

0413 575 454

enquiries@thewillowtree.org.au