

Coping with Loss

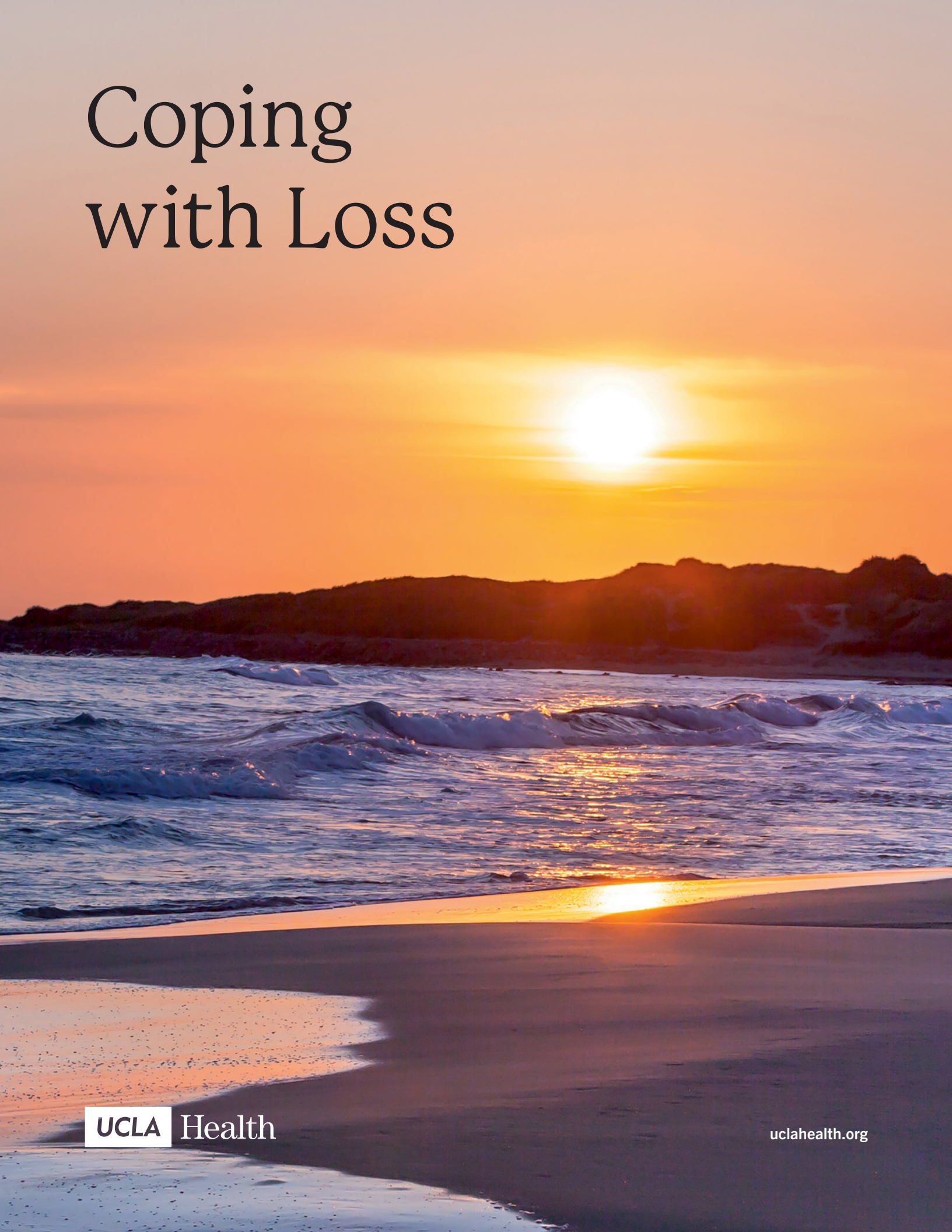




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Dear family members,

We know this is a hard time, and we are here to support you. This brochure includes information we hope will help. If you have questions or concerns, please reach out. **We are here for you.**

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Scan the QR code for more resources or visit the UCLA Health website:
uclahealth.org/medical-services/palliative-care/resources/bereavement-support

What You May See When Your Family Member Is Dying

Dying is a personal, unique experience. When you have questions, your medical team is here to help.

As your family member nears their end of life, their body may change in these ways:

Movement: They may slowly stop moving. If they seem uncomfortable, gently reposition them. Sitting up or in a chair may be more comfortable.

Understanding: They may become less aware of people and surroundings.

Confusion: They may feel confused or see things that are not there.

Hunger: They will stop feeling hungry. This is normal and we respect their choices about eating or drinking.

Incontinence: They may lose bladder or bowel control. Keep them clean and comfortable.

Sight: They may have trouble seeing or keeping their eyes closed. Bright lights can be uncomfortable. Keep the room calm and softly lit.

Hearing: Hearing and touch often fade last. Talk to them or play their favorite music. Turn off monitors to create a peaceful space.

Signs in the last hours to days:

Skin changes: Their hands and feet may turn purple or blue, and their skin may look pale yellow.

Breathing: May slow down or pause for 10-30 seconds.

Fluids: A rattling sound may occur as they lose the ability to swallow. Medication and positioning can help.

Behavior: Your family member will likely stop interacting with you before they die.

Heart rate: Their heart rate may speed up or slow down.

Temperature: Their hands and feet may feel cool or sweaty.

How you will know they have died:

There will be no breathing or heartbeat.

Their eyes will stop moving and may not close fully.

Their jaw relaxes and the mouth may be slightly open.

If you notice these signs, tell your medical team. We will guide you through the next steps. We will do everything possible to manage symptoms and ensure comfort during this time.



Grieving a Death

Grief is natural and affects the body and mind. People may feel or act differently, and that's normal.

Grief is not simple — feelings change over time. It can take months or years to adjust to the loss of a family member. Spending time with friends and family can help. If the grief feels like too much, please talk to a mental health expert or join a support group.

Physical responses to grief:

Thoughts: You may feel confused, forgetful, or struggle with simple tasks. Be patient with yourself.

Emotions: Strong feelings are normal and usually ease with time.

Behaviors: You may not act like yourself, which is part of coping.

Mourning the loss of a family member is different for everyone. These coping methods may help:

Talk about it: Share your feelings with others. Talking can be healing.

Allow feelings: Sadness, anger, frustration and even relief are all normal.

Take care of yourself: Eat, sleep, bathe and move your body. Basic self-care is key.

Prepare for firsts: Birthdays, anniversaries and holidays bring many feelings. Honor your family member by sharing memories or traditions.

Seek help: If your feelings are too strong for too long, a mental health expert can help.

Supporting Children and Teens in the Family

Explaining death to children and teens can feel overwhelming. Child life specialist and social workers can help. Use these ideas and advice based on the child's and teen's age:

Infants and toddlers:

- Are best supported with a comforting presence and a regular routine
- Don't understand death but can sense an adult's feelings
- Often respond to stress through crying, irritability, separation anxiety and trouble sleeping

Preschoolers:

- Are best supported with simple, honest explanations, and by validating their feelings.
- Don't understand that death is permanent (e.g., they will say that someone died, but then ask when the person will come back)
- May believe they caused the death (e.g. "I was so mad at Grandma and wanted her to die, so it's my fault she died.")
- Often respond to stress through changes in behavior, schoolwork, friendships, etc.

School-age children:

- Are best supported by answering questions honestly and letting them lead the conversation
- May ask detailed questions
- Often respond to stress through changes in behavior, schoolwork, friends, etc.
- Start to understand that death is final and happens to everyone

Teenagers:

- Are best supported by friendships, sticking to a routine and talking openly
- May form their own beliefs about death
- Often respond to stress through risky behaviors, withdrawal or habit changes
- Understand that death is permanent

For children of all ages, keep the following tips in mind:

1. Be curious, honest and keep answers simple.
2. Let them know it's normal to feel what they are feeling.
3. Share memories or do activities that honor your family member.

Questions to invite conversation:

1. "Sometimes I feel sad. Do you ever feel that way, too?"
2. "When you feel worried or upset, what helps you?"
3. "What can we do together to feel better?"

Checklist for End-of-Life

What to do before death:

- ☐ Talk about the type of care your family member wants with the medical team
- ☐ Gather advance care planning files, such as Advance Health Care Directive, Physician's Order for Life Sustaining Treatment (POLST), financial power of attorney.
- ☐ Make a custody plan for children under 18
- ☐ Talk about organ donation
- ☐ Organize important files and passwords
- ☐ Create a list of friends and family to contact
- ☐ Check insurance policies, including death and survivor benefits
- ☐ Contact spiritual or religious groups
- ☐ Update beneficiary details on plans and accounts
- ☐ Plan for pet adoption, including transferring veterinary information and updating microchip details
- ☐ Talk about funeral choices and select a funeral home
- ☐ You cannot access MyChart after death. Contact UCLA Health Medical Records at 310-825-6021. Learn more at www.uclahealth.org/patient-resources/medical-records.

What to do after death:

- ☐ Contact UCLA Health Decedent Affairs or Nursing Office after making funeral arrangements:
Ronald Reagan: 310-825-7846
Santa Monica: 424-259-6000
West Valley: 818-676-4000
- ☐ Order multiple copies of the death certificate through the funeral home. Receipt may take up to 30 days.
- ☐ If needed, contact agencies such as:
Social Security Administration:
800-772-1213
Veterans Administration:
800-698-2411
Los Angeles County Department of Medical Examiner (Coroner):
323-343-0512
1104 N. Mission Road,
Los Angeles, CA 90033
www.me.lacounty.gov/
After business hours:
323-343-0714, info@me.lacounty.gov
- ☐ Cancel any memberships and automatic payments
- ☐ Contact the employer for benefits and wages
- ☐ Notify landlords, utilities, attorneys, personal representatives and the post office
- ☐ Cancel insurance policies

UCLA Health Hospital Services

UCLA Health offers many services to help families during end-of-life care. This includes access to dedicated teams in the following areas:

Chase Child Life Program

Ronald Reagan: 310-267-9440

Santa Monica: 424-259-8219

West Valley: 818-676-4463

This program helps children and teens cope with a family member's illness or death. Specialists use play and counseling to help children and teens understand and manage their emotions during these difficult times.

Decedent Affairs and Nursing Supervisors

Ronald Reagan Decedent Affairs: 310-825-7846

Santa Monica Nursing Supervisor: 424-259-6000

West Valley Nursing Supervisor: 818-676-4000

Nursing supervisors and the Decedent Affairs team help with coordinating paperwork and providing guidance on next steps.

The Ronald Reagan Decedent Affairs Office is available:

- Monday – Friday: 9 am – 6 pm
- Saturdays: 9 am – 4 pm
- For after hours, Sundays and holidays, call the Ronald Reagan nursing supervisor at 310-825-9111.

The Santa Monica nursing supervisor is available 24 hours a day.

Department of Care Coordination and Clinical Social Work

Ronald Reagan: 310-267-9700

Santa Monica: 424-259-7270

West Valley: 818-676-4146

These team members help with emotional and family challenges. They can also give referrals for grief support.

Department of Spiritual Care

Ronald Reagan: 310-825-7484

Santa Monica: 424-259-8170

Chaplains are available at Ronald Reagan UCLA and Santa Monica Medical Centers. Chaplains provide spiritual and emotional support to people of all backgrounds. They can connect you with community-based religious leaders. Your own clergy is welcome at any time.

Gardens and Meditation Room/Chapel

The Ronald Reagan and Santa Monica campuses offer a peaceful indoor and outdoor space with meditation rooms. Please ask about their locations.

More details:

Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center:
uclahealth.org/hospitals/reagan

UCLA Santa Monica Medical Center:
uclahealth.org/hospitals/santa-monica

UCLA West Valley Medical Center:
uclahealth.org/hospitals/west-valley

Burial and Cremation Resources

Here is a list of services to help you plan. If your family member died in the hospital, you will need to fill out paperwork so the hospital can release them to the funeral home you have selected. Contact the hospital nursing supervisor or Decedent Affairs.

For international arrangements, a local funeral home can guide you through the process.

The funeral home will:

- Pick up the body from place of death
- Keep the body until it is buried or cremated
- Prepare the body for burial or cremation
- Arrange the burial or cremation with a cemetery
- Handle travel for burial
- Lead the services for burial or cremation



Scan the QR code for updated burial and cremation resources or visit the UCLA Health website:
uclahealth.org/medical-services/palliative-care/resources/bereavement-support

Cremation only

Aftercare Cremation

Mission Hills, CA 91606
818-378-7348

The Alpha Society

Burbank, CA 91505
818-972-9194

Bastian & Perrott, Oswald Mortuary

Northridge, CA 91324
818-886-8600

Cremation Society of Los Angeles

Various locations
800-464-6091

Los Angeles County Department of Medical Examiner (Coroner)

Los Angeles, CA 90033
323-343-0512

Mount Sinai Memorial Park

Simi Valley, CA 93063
805-306-6407

National Cremation Service

North Hollywood, CA 91606
800-464-6091

Neptune Society

Various locations
800-637-8863
Sherman Oaks, CA 91423
818-845-2415

Omega Society Cremation and Burial

Orange, CA 92867
714-202-2883

Pierce Bros., Valley Oaks

Westlake Village, CA 91362
818-889-0902

Strickland & Snively Mortuary

1952 Long Beach Blvd, CA 90806
562-426-3365

Culver City

Gates Kingsley & Gates Smith

Salsbury
Culver City, CA 90230
310-837-7121

Holy Cross Mortuary

Culver City, CA 90230
310-836-5500

Los Angeles

Abbott & Hast Mortuary, Inc.

Los Angeles, CA 90026
323-661-1111

Angelus Funeral Home

Los Angeles, CA 90008
323-296-6666

Armstrong, Garcia & McKenzie Mortuary

Venice Blvd, CA 90015
213-747-9121

Avalon Pasadena Funeral Home

Pasadena, CA 91104
626-449-2121

Cedar Hill Mortuary and Accommodations

Los Angeles, CA 90041
323-255-0710

Chevra Kadisha

Los Angeles, CA 90046
323-653-8886

Forest Lawn Memorial Park (various locations)

Los Angeles, CA 90068
800-204-3131

FRIENDS Funeral Home

Venice, CA 90291
888-939-5959
Español: 323-886-1400

Fukui Mortuary, Inc.

Los Angeles, CA 90012
213-626-0441

Funeraria del angel Mirabel Mortuary

Bell, CA 90201
323-560-2216

Funeraria del angel Pierce Brothers Mortuary

Los Angeles CA 90015
213-749-4151

Funeraria Latino Americana

Los Angeles 90023
323-265-7016

Groman Mortuary

Los Angeles, CA 90015
800-371-0893

Guerra & Gutierrez Mortuary, Inc.

Los Angeles, CA 90022
323-722-1900

Hillside Memorial Park and Mortuary

Los Angeles, CA 90045 and other
locations
800-576-1994

Hollywood Forever Funeral Home

Los Angeles, CA 90038
323-469-1181

Home of Peace Mortuary

Los Angeles, CA 90023
323-656-6260

International Funeral Home, Inc.

Los Angeles, CA 90033
323-266-2300

Islamic Center of Southern California

Los Angeles, CA 90020
213-382-9200

Kubota Nikkei Mortuary

Los Angeles, CA 90015
213-749-1449

Los Angeles Funeral Service, Inc

Inglewood, CA 90302
310-390-9969

Malinow and Silverman Mortuary

Los Angeles, CA 90045 & other
locations
800-710-7100

**Mount Sinai Memorial
Parks & Mortuary**

Los Angeles, CA 90068
323-469-6000

**Pierce Brothers Memorial
Park & Mortuary**

Los Angeles, CA 90024 & other
locations
310-474-1579

Tulip Cremation

Los Angeles, CA 90071
844-942-4909

San Bernadino**AARON Cremation and Burial
Services**

San Bernardino, CA 92404
800-303-3610

San Fernando Valley**Angeleno Mortuary**

Van Nuys, CA 91401
818-778-1788

Crawford Lorenzen Mortuary

Northridge, CA 91324
818-349-9701

Funeraria del Angel Van Nuys

Van Nuys, CA 91401
818-785-8617

**Gorman & Eden Mortuary and Eden
Memorial Park Cemetery**

Mission Hills, CA 91345
818-361-7161

SoCal Cremation and Funerals

Van Nuys, CA 91406
877-790-9455

**Gates, Kingsley & Gates
Praiswater Mortuary**

Canoga Park, CA 91303
818-348-3354

Glen Haven Memorial Park

Sylmar, CA 91342
818-899-5211

Mission Hills Catholic Mortuary

Mission Hills, CA 91345
818-361-7387

Reardon Simi Valley Funeral Home

Simi Valley, CA 93065
805-526-6677

**Rose Family Funeral
Home & Cremation**

Simi Valley, CA 93063
805-581-3800

**Utter-McKinley San Fernando
Mission Mortuary**

Mission Hills, CA 91345
818-361-4751

Santa Monica**Farrington Mortuary**

Santa Monica, CA 90401
800-674-3659

**Gates, Kingsley & Gates
Moeller Murphy**

Santa Monica, CA 90404
310-395-9988

**Woodlawn Cemetery,
Mausoleum & Mortuary**

Santa Monica, CA 90404
310-458-8717

Torrance**Lighthouse Funeral Home**

Torrance, CA 90503
310-792-7575

Ventura County**Mount Sinai Memorial
Parks & Mortuary**

Simi Valley, CA
805-306-6407

Perez Family Funeral Home

Camarillo, CA 93010
805-983-3457

Disclaimer: UCLA Health does not recommend, endorse, sponsor, support or have any affiliation with any of the agencies identified above. UCLA Health has not conducted any type of review or due diligence of these agencies and is listing publicly available information for reference purposes only.

Grief Support

Talking to a mental health expert can help you find ways to cope. Joining a support group may also provide comfort. It is okay to ask for and accept help. Here are a few options:

Cancer-Related Resources

Cancer Support Community

Various locations
888-793-9355

Simms/Mann UCLA Center for Integrative Oncology

Los Angeles, CA 90095
310-794-6644

WeSpark Cancer Support Center

Sherman Oaks, CA 91403
818-906-3022

Death by Murder

National Organization Parents of Murdered Children, Inc.

Los Angeles: 310-567-3540
Greater Orange County: 714-999-7132

Death by Suicide

Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Services

Culver City, CA 90230
310-390-8896

Suicide.org

California Suicide Support Groups
(Online information only)
www.suicide.org

General Resources

Art & Creativity for Healing

Laguna Niguel, CA 92677
949-367-1902

Calabasas Counseling and Grief Recovery Center

Calabasas, CA 91302
818-222-3895

Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health Services

Culver City, CA 90230
310-390-8896

Grief Recovery Method

Sherman Oaks, CA 91413
818-907-9600

Hope Connection

West Los Angeles, Encino
and Agoura Hills
818-788-HOPE (4673)

Hospice of the Conejo

Thousand Oaks, CA 91360
805-495-2145

Kaiser Permanente Medical Center(s)

Woodland Hills, CA 91367
Panorama City, CA 91402
833-574-2273

Livingston Memorial Visiting Nurse Association and Hospice

Grief & Bereavement Services
Ventura, CA 93003
805-389-6870

Maple Counseling Center

Beverly Hills, CA 90210
310-271-9999

National Alliance for Childhood Grief

nacg.org

National Hospice and Palliative Care Program (Online information only)

Nhpco.org

Northridge Hospital Medical Center

Northridge, CA 91325
818-885-8500, ext. 4560

The Compassionate Friends

Glendale, CA: 818-236-3635
Los Angeles/Beverly Hills, CA:
310-474-3407
Spanish Support Line: 310-474-3407

The Gathering Place

Torrance, CA 90503
310-543-7267 or 310-543-3437

New Hope Grief Support Community

Long Beach, CA 90807
562-429-0075

OUR House Grief Support Center

Los Angeles, CA 90025
310-475-0299
Woodland Hills, CA 91367
818-222-3344

Pathways Volunteer Hospice

Lakewood, CA 90713
562-531-3031

VNA Care

Ontario, CA 91764
800-521-5539

Older Adults

Culver City Senior Center

Culver City, CA 90230
310-253-6717

Jewish Family Service of Los Angeles

Various locations in Los Angeles

One Generation Senior Enrichment Center

Van Nuys, CA 91406
818-705-2345

WISE & Healthy Aging

Santa Monica, CA 90401
310-394-9871, ext. 289

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The image features a serene sunset scene over a beach. The sky is a gradient of soft pinks, oranges, and purples. The ocean is a deep blue with white-capped waves rolling onto a sandy shore. In the distance, a small boat is visible on the horizon. The UCLA Health logo is centered over the image. The word "UCLA" is in a bold, dark red serif font, enclosed within a white rectangular box. Below this box, the word "Health" is written in a white serif font, followed by a registered trademark symbol (®).

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