

# GOOD DEATH: A CONCEPT ANALYSIS

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Purpose: To present a poster on a concept analysis of good death. Good death is a concept widely used by those who care for persons at the end-of-life, but has different meanings to different people. For some, good death refers to the moment of death; yet for others, good death is a process for which one can prepare. A consistent definition of good death would increase understanding of both lay persons and professionals in order to improve care to dying individuals and their families as well as assist researchers in developing appropriate research questions and studies.

Method: A literature search was conducted using PubMed, CINAHL, ProQuest and PsychArticles to identify literature on the topic of good death. Key words used in the search included various combinations of the following terms: good, death, dying, end-of-life, comfort, hospice and palliative care. About half of the literature took the form of scholarly papers. The remaining literature was research with a variety of methods utilized but mostly qualitative. The concept was analyzed using the Wilson method of analysis as described by Walker and Avant (1988). The analysis included a literature review, development of cases, identification of attributes, linkage to middle range theory and development of a model.

Findings: There was great heterogeneity of views in the literature about what constitutes a good death. Journey, loving presence and comfort were identified as attributes of good death. The following definition was synthesized from the analysis of the literature: good death is the journey one embarks upon at the end of life which occurs in comfort amidst a loving presence. A model depicting good death based on the above definition will be presented.

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Discussion: Good death is a concept that has been resistant to definition despite considerable attention in the literature. Perhaps this is so because death is so uniquely personal to each human being. Nevertheless death remains one of the great mysteries of life. It is hoped that this definition of good death will provide conceptual clarity for the nursing profession to investigate how to ensure a good death occurs for all.

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