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Rituals for Just before (Ehtezar) and Immediately After Death

Let us create a scenario in which you are sitting in front of a very sick friend or a relative whom you have come to visit. He/she is alone in the house. You are the only other person present. Suddenly you see him/her struggling for breath. He/she is taking his/her last breath! Dying! The color of his/her face is changing. He is said to be in *Saqarat* – the pain of death. Gradually, he/she stops breathing and is dead. What should you be doing as required by the *Shariah* while the person is in the course of dying and soon after death?

I am not aware of the legal requirements here in Canada. Therefore, I will leave it to you to find out.

Before the Death, During the Saqarat ul Mawt

a) Move the dying person to face *Qibla* in such a position that the soles of his/her feet face *Qibla*. In other words, if he/she were to sit upright his/her face would face *Qibla*.
b) Recite the *Shahadah* and make him/her repeat it. It should cover *Tawhid /Nubuwwat/ Imamat* and make him/her recite dua for *Istighfar* to ask forgiveness from Allah for his/her sins.
c) Recite *Surah Yasin*, *Wassafat*, *Ayatul Qursi* and other Ayats from the Qur'an to ease the moments of *Saqarat*.

Right After the Death

d) Close the eyes and the mouth of the dead person.
e) Stretch his/her arms along his/her sides and keep his/her legs straight.

f) Cover his/her body with a sheet of cloth.

g) Inform his/her *Wali* or next of kin (if *wali* is not present) to come immediately.

h) Recite the Qur'an until the body is taken away for *Ghusl Mayyit.*

The *Wali*, the personal representative appointed by the deceased in his/her *will* or next of kin is personally responsible for all the after death rituals. His prior permission is necessary before any other person(s) can handle the body.

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