

Health Tips

Grief Takes No Holiday

How can I help others?

- **Let someone talk.** Do ask about the deceased. Help someone reminisce.
- **Don't try to make it better.** Statements like "Cheer up," "It was God's will," and "You'll get over it" are not helpful.
- **Hang in there.** Give your gift of presence, even when you feel pained and helpless. Company is especially helpful after the funeral, when friends and family return to their regular lives.
- **Lend a hand.** Offer to do something specific, like chores or errands, even if you are not sure it's the right thing to do. Grieving people may be unable to say what they need.
- **Keep your promises.** Grieving people feel abandoned if you don't follow through on pledges to call, visit, or ask them over.
- **Don't judge or dictate how someone grieves.** People grieve in their own ways, and their shifting needs (whether or not to discuss the deceased, for example) may be inconsistent. Take your cues from them.
- **Be open to holiday changes.** Someone who is grieving may wish to alter certain holiday traditions or withdraw from full participation.

(Harvard Women's Health Watch, Dec. 2002, pg. 3 quote.
F. Atkins, PhD, RN, CNS)

Provided by Community of Christ Health Ministries Assoc.

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