

Heartbreak increases heart attack risk: study

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People mourning the loss of a loved one are six times more likely to suffer cardiac arrest, potential proof that you can indeed die of a broken heart, Australian researchers said Tuesday.

According to a Heart Foundation study of the physical changes suffered immediately after a profound loss, grieving people were at significantly higher risk of heart problems, said lead researcher Thomas Buckley.

"We found higher blood pressure, increased [heart rate](#) and changes to immune system and clotting that would increase the risk of heart attack," Buckley said.

Of the 160 people studied, half were mourning the loss of a partner or child, and their risk of heart attack increased six-fold, he said.

The risk, which was evident in people as young as 30, reduced after six months and levelled out after two years, he added.

A sudden flood of [stress hormones](#) is believed to be behind the grief-induced heartache, a condition that earlier studies have found is more likely to affect women.

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