

Prolonged Grief Disorder

Psychiatry.org - Prolonged Grief Disorder

For a diagnosis of **prolonged grief disorder**, the loss of a loved one had to have occurred at **least a year ago for adults**, and **at least 6 months ago for children and adolescents**.

In addition, the grieving individual must have experienced *at least three of the symptoms* below *nearly every day for at least the last month prior to the diagnosis*.

Symptoms of prolonged grief disorder (APA, 2022) include:

- Identity disruption (such as feeling as though part of oneself has died).
- Marked sense of disbelief about the death.
- Avoidance of reminders that the person is dead.
- Intense emotional pain (such as anger, bitterness, sorrow) related to the death.
- Difficulty with reintegration (problems socializing, pursuing interests, planning for the future).
- Emotional numbness (absence or marked reduction of emotional experience).
- Feeling that life is meaningless.
- Intense loneliness (feeling alone or detached from others).

In addition, the person's bereavement lasts longer than might be expected based on social, cultural, or religious norms.

An estimated 7%-10% of bereaved adults will experience the persistent symptoms of prolonged grief disorder (Szuhany et al., 2021).

Among children and adolescents who have lost a loved one, approximately 5%-10% will experience depression, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and/or prolonged grief disorder following bereavement (Melhem et al., 2013).

Prolonged grief disorder is the newest disorder to be added to the [*Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders \(DSM\)*](#). It is included in the text revision of *DSM-5 (DSM-5-TR)*, which was released in March 2022.