

A Guide for the Muslim Funeral

Washing the body

1. A male's body is to be washed by a male.
2. A female's body should be washed by a female.
3. A minor's body can be washed by either a man or a woman
4. A husband can wash his wife's body and vice versa.

Procedure for washing the body

1. Place the body on the washing table.
2. Keeping the private parts of the body covered, remove all other garments from the body.
3. Gently but firmly press the stomach and clean out by a towel or cloth any excretions that may have resulted by stomach pressing.
4. The body is now ready for washing. Body should be washed with your hands or a piece of clean cloth. Use clean and warm water to wash the body.
5. The body is to be washed three times, five times or seven times-always an odd number of times.
6. For each washing, first place the body on its left and wash the right side using warm water and soap. Then place it on its right side and wash the left side. Male's hair should be unbraided, washed and combed. Female's hair should be gathered into two braids, with loose hair at end of each braid.
7. For the final washing, scented water (non-alcoholic scent) can be used.
8. Now perform ablution (wudu) for the body. Do not forget to clean the teeth and nose also.
9. Generous application of non-alcoholic perfume can be made on various parts of the body. Perfumed cotton can be placed on the front and the rear private parts and the nostrils.

Wrapping the body in shroud (kafan)

1. For men, three pieces of clean, cotton preferably white cloth should be used. Each piece of cloth should be large enough to cover the entire body.
2. A similar procedure applies for women except that five pieces of cloth are used. Again each piece of cloth should be large enough to cover the body.
3. Apply non-alcoholic perfume to the kafan.
4. Use a piece of cloth and tie the top (head side) and bottom (foot side). The two tie knots should be different so as to recognize the head side.

Material Required

| <u>Name of the Cloth piece</u> | <u>Approximate size</u> |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Kafan | 4 feet x 12 feet |
| 2. Head Wrap | 4 feet x 4 feet |
| 3. Body Wrap | 4 feet x 6 feet |
| 4. Chest Wrap | 4 feet x 4 feet |
| 5. Body Sheet | 4 feet x 8 feet |

Procedure

1. Tear a one inch strip from the length of the Kafan sheet and use it as strings to tie the body.
2. For wrapping an adult male body, three pieces, i.e., Kafan, Body wrap and Body sheet are required.
3. For wrapping an adult female body, all five pieces are required.

Procedure for wrapping the body (male)

1. Spread the Body Sheet on a flat table, a firm bed or floor.
2. Then the Body wrap on the Body Sheet about one foot each from the top and the bottom edge of the Body Sheet.
3. Fold the Kafan sheet over in half, so that its size after folding is 4 feet x 6 feet.
4. At the crease in the middle, cut a hole big enough for the head of the body to pass through.
5. Unfold the Kafan sheet and lay it on the two sheets prepared earlier in steps 1&2 above; the cut hole will now be in the center of the Kafan sheet.
6. Lay the body on its back on one half (which is on the other two sheets) and pull the other half of the Kafan sheet over the whole body, making sure that the head comes out through the hole; except for the head, the rest of the body should be covered inside the Kafan sheet.
7. Comb the hair on top and back of head.
8. Roll the upper half of Kafan sheet from both the right and the left sides to gather in the center of the body.
9. Wrap the lower long sides of the Kafan sheet over the body from both the right and the left sides (from shoulders to feet).
10. Then unroll the upper half of the Kafan sheet to spread it over the lower half wrapped previously on the body (as above) and wrap it along both sides of the whole body. To do this, the whole body will have to be tilted on its side to push the Kafan sheet under the body; first on the right side and then on the left side.
11. Wrap the left side of the Body Wrap over the body and cover it by wrapping the right side of the Body Wrap over the left side on the body.
12. Wrap the Body Sheet in a like manner, with the right side over the left side on the whole body.
13. Gather at the head and tie a string, then gather at the feet and tie a string. Use another string to tie in the middle of the body.

Procedures for wrapping the body (female)

1. Spread the Body sheet on a flat table, a firm bed or floor.
2. Lay the Chest wrap on the Body sheet about two feet each from the top and the bottom edge.
3. Then lay the Body wrap on the Chest wrap about one foot each from the top and the bottom edge of the Body sheet.
4. Fold the Kafan sheet over in half, so that its size after folding is 4 feet x 6 feet.
5. At the crease in the middle, cut a hole big enough for the head of the body to pass through.
6. Unfold the Kafan sheet and lay it on the three sheets prepared earlier in steps 1-3 above; the cut hole will now be in the center of the Kafan sheet.

7. Lay the body on its back on one half (which is on the other three sheets) and pull the other half of the Kafan sheet over the whole body, making sure that the head comes out through the hole; except for the head the rest of the body should now be covered inside the Kafan sheet.
8. Comb and brush the hair in two groups loose or braids; spread one group on the right breast and the other group of hair on the left breast.
9. Roll the upper half of Kafan sheet from both the right and the left sides to gather in the center of the body.
10. Wrap the lower long sides of the Kafan sheet over the body from both the right and the left sides (from shoulders to feet).
11. Then unroll the upper half of the Kafan sheet to spread it over the lower half wrapped previously on the body (as above) and wrap it along both sides of the whole body. To do this, the whole body will have to be tilted on its side to push the Kafan sheet under the body; first on the right side and then on the left side.
12. Fold the Head wrap in half; raise the head and upper part of the body to slip about one half of the Head wrap under the body.
13. Then fold the other half over and around the head so that the face is not covered and the lower edge of the Head wrap covers the hair on the breast.
14. Now wrap the left side of the Body wrap over the body and cover it by wrapping the right side of the Body wrap over the left side on the body.
15. Next in alike manner wrap the Chest wrap with the right side of the wrap over the left side of the wrap on the body.
16. Use the Kafan strings to tie around the body; one just below the shoulders, another in the middle on the navel, and third string a little above the knees on the thighs.
17. Cover the face with the Head wrap.
18. Lastly wrap the Body sheet all over the body with the right side over the left side on the body; gather at the head and tie a string and then gather at the feet and tie a string. If necessary tie a string in the middle of the body also.