

## Study finds evidence of some form of life after death

There have long been stories of near-death or out-of-body experiences but, as researchers at the University of Southampton in the U.K. wryly note, "objective studies on these experiences are limited."

So they decided to investigate whether these claims corresponded with actual events. Their conclusion: It does seem to be possible for some form of awareness to happen for up to a few minutes after death, they report in a study published in the journal *Resuscitation*.

Beginning in 2008, scientists looked at 2,060 people who went into cardiac arrest (which they describe as "biologically synonymous with death") at 15 different hospitals in the U.S., U.K., and Austria. Of the 330 people who survived, about 40% recalled awareness while they were clinically dead. (The lead doctor tells the *Telegraph* that number could be higher if some of those people's memories weren't dulled by drugs or sedatives.)

Of those, 46% had memories not commonly associated with NDEs. A sampling:

- "I was told I was going to die and the quickest way was to say the last short word I could remember."
- "All plants, no flowers"
- "Saw lions and tigers"
- "Being dragged through deep water"

Only 9% had experiences "compatible" with NDEs, and 2% had ones compatible with OBEs, where they explicitly "saw" or "heard" moments tied to their resuscitation. There was one "validated" case in which the patient was able to describe events that happened during a three-minute period in which he had no heartbeat.

"This is paradoxical, since the brain typically ceases functioning within 20-30 seconds of the heart stopping and doesn't resume again until the heart has been restarted," says the study's lead researcher. "These experiences warrant further investigation." (Scientists had previously learned that rat brains go into overdrive following cardiac arrest.)

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