

**If two members in a family die within 10 days of each other -  
what is the procedure?**

**GARUDA PURANA PRETA KHANDA**

**CHAPTER THIRTEEN "SAPINDI AND SUTAKA"**

The sapindi ceremony and sutaka are related. Sutaka refers to the "abnormal" state related to death. One remains in sutaka until the sapindi ceremony is completed and no amount of dana will be of any benefit while one is in the state of sutaka. Generally sutaka ends after ten days. If news of death of a close relative is received late (but within ten days) then sutaka lasts for what remains of the ten days; if news is received after ten days have elapsed then sutaka lasts for three nights and if the news is received after one year then sutaka ends after a bath. If a second death occurs within the first six days of the first death, then sutaka for both is calculated in terms of the first death.

**Sutaka in respect of children:**

- death of male children before the first tooth appears: sutaka terminates upon bathing.
- death of male children after teeth appear but before removal of the first hair: sutaka lasts for one night.
- death of male children after upanayana: sutaka as in the case of adult deaths.
- death of female children up to the age of 27 months : sutaka terminates upon bathing.
- death of female children older than 27 months but before engagement: sutaka lasts for one day.
- death of female children after engagement: sutaka lasts for three days in both families
- death of females after marriage : sutaka lasts for the full period of ten days.

**The following activities are prohibited during the period of sutaka (death related):**

- Aashirvaada
- devapujana
- sleeping on a bed
- namaskara
- sandhya
- dana
- vedapaathana
- havana
- vrata
- pitra tarpana
- feeding of brahmama
- japa

A king (ruler), one who is agnihotri, a brahmacari, and a sannyasi are not affected by sutaka. The sapindi ceremony is performed on the twelfth day, or after 3 paksha (one and a half months), or after six months or after one year has passed.

Lord Vishnu recommends that the sapindi be performed on the twelfth day.

**The following procedure is given for the sapindi ceremony:**

- Vishvadeva pujana
- Offer vikeera pinda followed by one pinda each for the deceased, his father, his grandfather and his great-grandfather (male deceased) or for the deceased, her mother, her grandmother and her great-grandmother (unmarried female deceased); in the case of married females offer the three pinda in respect of her in-laws.
- Offer candana, agarabati, etc on pinda
- Cut the preta pinda into three pieces and mix one piece each with the pinda of the father, grandfather and great-grandfather (or female equivalents).
- Offer tarpana using the mantra ending “te svadhaa namah”
- Do puja: svasti vaacana, ganesha gauri puja, kalasha puja, naugraha puja and havana.
- Brahman bhojan should then be provided and dana should be given in accordance with one’s ability. The following types of dana (among others) are considered beneficial: shayyaa, ghee, grains, clothing, yajnopavita.

After the sapindi ceremony 12 MASIKA (monthly) pinda, ONE PAAKSHIKA PINDA (fifteenth day), ONE TRAIIPAAKSHIKA PINDA (one and half months), ONE NYUNSHAANMAASHIKA PINDA (five and half months) and ONE NYUNAABDIKA PINDA (eleven and half months) are offered, thus making up the third set of sixteen pinda .

In the event that there is an Adhikmaasa between the cremation and the vaarshika shraadha then the vaarshika shraadha should be done in the thirteenth month.

Gaya Shraadha and Teertha Shraadha should not be performed until one year has passed.

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