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# The Effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Grief Experiences of Bereaved Relatives: An Overview Review

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## Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted grief experiences of bereaved relatives and altered accustomed ways of coping with loss. To understand how bereaved relatives experienced grief during COVID-19, a review, using the overview method, was conducted. An overview of empirical data about this subject has been lacking and therefore, PubMed and CINAHL databases were searched for empirical studies published from January 1, 2020 until December 31, 2021. 28 articles were included in the review. Thematic analysis showed different emotional responses, changes in grief, the effect of absence during final moments, a lack of involvement in the caring process, the impact on communities and social support systems and the alteration of funerals among bereaved relatives. During COVID-19, death is characterized by poor bereavement outcomes and health implications, but bereaved also show signs of resilience and coping. Directions for future research about cultural and societal differences in grief and support methods are suggested.

**Keywords:** COVID-19; bereavement; grief; health; pandemic.