Near-death experience (NDE) is a personal contact correlated with impending death, encompassing multiple possible sensations including detachment from the body, feelings of levitation, total calmness, security, warmth, the experience of absolute destruction, and the appearance of a light.

They are often thought of as mystical happenings, but research is now revealing scientific answers for virtually all of their common features.

The reality of what actually happens in near-death experiences are now known as a sense of being dead widely, a voyage toward a bright light, a feeling that one’s "soul" has left the body, and escape to another reality where bliss and love are all encompassing.

Via

According to a Gallup poll
Nearly 3 percent of the U.S. people say they have had a near-death experience. They are reported across religions, with written records of them dating back to ancient Greece. Not all of these occurrences coincide with brushes with death. One study of 58 patients who recounted near-death experiences found 30 were not truly in danger of expiring, although most of them thought they were.

Mobbs and Caroline Watt at the University of Edinburgh detailed this research.
Latterly, a host of studies has revealed the potential basis for all the elements of such experiences. "Many of the phenomena associated with near-death experiences can be biologically explained," says neuroscientist Dean Mobbs, at the University of Cambridge's Medical Research Council Cognition and Brain Sciences Unit.

More like a walking corpse.
Say, for example, the feeling of being dead is not limited to near-death experiences, patients with Cotard or "walking corpse" syndrome hold the delusional belief that they are dead.

Although the mechanism behind the syndrome remains unknown.
This disorder has occurred following trauma, such as during advanced stages of typhoid and multiple sclerosis, and has been linked with brain regions such as the parietal cortex and the prefrontal cortex—"the parietal cortex is typically involved in attentional processes, and the prefrontal cortex is involved in delusions observed in psychiatric conditions such as schizophrenia," Mobbs explains. One possible rationale is that patients are seeking to make sense of the strange experiences they are having.

**Out of body experiences are common during interrupted sleep.**

Say, for example, the experience of feeling paralyzed or sleep paralysis, while still conscious of the outside world, is reported in up to 40 percent of all people and is linked with vivid dreamlike hallucinations that can result in the feeling of hovering above one's body.

**Parkinson’s disease**
A variety of reasons might also account for statements by those dying of meeting the dead. For instance, Parkinson's disease patients have reported visions of even monsters, ghosts. The explanation of this phenomena is Parkinson's involves abnormal functioning of dopamine, a neurotransmitter that can provoke delusions. And when it comes to the everyday experience of reliving moments from one's life, one accused might be the locus coeruleus, a midbrain area that rescues noradrenaline, a stress hormone one would expect to be discharged at high levels while trauma. The locus coeruleus is highly correlated with brain sections that mediate passion and vision, such as the hypothalamus and amygdala.

**Ketamine can also trigger out-of-body experiences and hallucinations.**
Also, research now shows that some therapeutic and recreational narcotics can mirror the happiness often felt in near-death experiences, such as the anesthetic. Ketamine affects the brain’s opioid system, which can simply become active even without medications when animals are under attack, suggesting injury might set off this aspect of near-death experiences, Mobbs explains.

Moving through a tunnel.
Lastly, one of the most popular aspects of near-death hallucinations is moving through a tunnel toward a bright light. Although the specific causes of this part of near-death experiences remain unclear, tunnel vision can occur when blood and oxygen flow is drained to the eye, as can happen with the extreme anxiety and oxygen loss that are both common to dying.

And some basis in normal brain function gone amiss.
Furthermore, the knowledge of the lore regarding near-death episodes might play a pivotal role in experiencing them a self-fulfilling prediction. Such findings "provide scientific evidence for something that has always been in the realm of paranormality," Mobbs says. "I personally believe that understanding the process of dying can help us come to terms with this inevitable part of life."

Out of body experiences.
"One potential obstacle to further research on near-death experiences will be analyzing them experimentally," says cognitive neuroscientist Olaf Blanke at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne in Switzerland, who has studied out-of-body experiences. Still, their work has shown that this can be done for out-of-body experiences, so why not for near-death-experience-associated sensations?"