

# How to survive on 'Game of Thrones': Switch allegiances

December 9 2018

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"Death is certain, the time is not"  
~ Jaquen H'ghar

### MORTALITY AND SURVIVAL

**56%** IMPORTANT CHARACTERS DYING BEFORE THE END OF SEASON 7

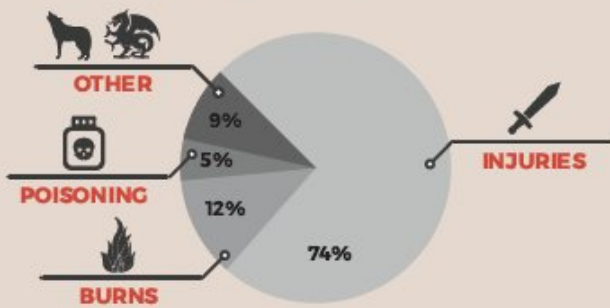
SURVIVAL TIME RANGED FROM **11 SECONDS** TO **57 HOURS**

PROBABILITY OF DYING WITHIN FIRST HOUR AFTER APPEARING **14%**

### MORE LIKELY TO SURVIVE



### CAUSES OF DEATH



### CIRCUMSTANCES OF DEATH



SOURCE: LYSTAD RP, BROWN BT. "DEATH IS CERTAIN, THE TIME IS NOT": MORTALITY AND SURVIVAL IN GAME OF THRONES. INJURY EPIDEMIOLOGY 2018.

Statistics on death and survival on Game of Thrones. Credit: Dr. Reidar Lystad, 2018

Characters in the Game of Thrones TV series are more likely to die if they do not switch allegiance, and are male, according to an article published in the open access journal *Injury Epidemiology*.

Researchers at Macquarie University, Australia, evaluated the deaths of all important Game of Thrones characters across seven seasons of the show and found that characters were more likely to survive if they switched allegiances, such as Tyrion Lannister who switches allegiances between the houses Lannister and Targaryen. The risk of death was also greater for characters that were 'lowborn' (not a Lord or Lady), compared to those that were 'highborn'.

Dr. Reidar Lystad, injury epidemiologist at the Australian Institute of Health Innovation and corresponding author of the study, said: "The risk of death is high among characters in Game of Thrones. By the end of the seventh [season](#), more than half of the characters had died—186 out of the 330 characters we included in this study—with [violent deaths](#) being the most common by far."

Dr. Lystad added: "While these findings may not be surprising for regular viewers, we have identified several factors that may be associated with better or worse [survival](#), which may help us to speculate about who will prevail in the final season."

The authors found that the majority of deaths occurred in Westeros (80.1%), and the most common place of death was in the home. The

most common causes of death were injuries (73.7%), and particularly wounds of the head and neck, including 13 decapitations. Only two deaths from natural causes occurred across the seven seasons of the show: Maester Aemon and Old Nan, who both died of old age. The remainder of deaths were from burns (11.8%) or poisonings (4.8%). The most common circumstances of deaths were assault (63.0%), operations of war (24.4%), and legal executions (5.4%).

The probability of dying within the first hour after first appearing on screen was around 14%. The survival time of characters ranged from 11 seconds to 57 hours and 15 minutes. The median survival time was estimated to be 28 hours and 48 minutes.

The researchers collected data on mortality and survival of 330 characters from all 67 episodes from seasons one to seven of Game of Thrones. They recorded data on the sociodemographic status of the characters, including their sex, [social status](#), type of occupation, [religious affiliation](#), and allegiance, alongside their survival time, and the circumstances of their death. This information was used to quantify predictors of [death](#). The researchers crosschecked all of their data with Internet Movie Database (IMDb) and Game of Thrones Wiki.

**More information:** Reidar P. Lystad et al, "Death is certain, the time is not": mortality and survival in Game of Thrones, *Injury Epidemiology* (2018). [DOI: 10.1186/s40621-018-0174-7](https://doi.org/10.1186/s40621-018-0174-7)

Provided by BioMed Central

Citation: How to survive on 'Game of Thrones': Switch allegiances (2018, December 9) retrieved 19 November 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-12-survive-game-thrones-allegiances.html>

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