

# Your Health

● Real-life stories ● Latest health news ● Expert advice

## He's WATCHING over me

Through her work, Penny still feels so close to her late husband...

**PENNY MATON, 42.**  
Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire



Phil

I adored my husband Phil, and he adored me. We both felt so lucky to have found each other.

He was 36 and I was 28 when we met, but between us we already had six kids, aged from six to 14. On days out, we were like *The Brady Bunch*!

Life couldn't get much better.

But after eight years together, Phil started getting back pain. It turned out to be lung cancer.

Only 44, he was determined to fight it. But then he was offered palliative care, which meant his cancer was already terminal.

We were both distraught. And

over the next months my tall, strong husband shrank before my eyes.

Neither of us could face thinking about his last days, and we were shocked when the local hospice got in touch. But when we visited we found it was a lovely homely place, with comfy furnishings and delicious food.

Phil started going in for pain management, sometimes staying for a week at a time. It soon became a second home and we even spent our wedding anniversary there.

'You're so young, you will love again,' Phil told me. 'And that will be fine – I'll still be watching over you and taking care of you if I can.'

And only six months after the diagnosis, Phil lost his battle.

At first I swore I'd never love again. Nobody could match Phil.

But the following year, I met Richard, 35. He was lovely, and let me talk about Phil as much as I liked. So although I was falling in love again, Phil was still a big part of my life.

Richard helped me to love again

And when I saw a care assistant job advertised at



I found a way to move forward

the Hospice of St Francis where Phil had died, I applied – and was delighted to be given the job.

On my first day I bumped into three nurses who'd been with me and Phil at the end. It was almost as if Phil was sending me a sign.

I loved the new job, making families feel as special as possible through their hardest time.

Working in the place where Phil had died helped me to look forward, without forgetting the past.

I will always feel Phil's loss, but I'm so lucky to have a man as special as Richard.

I meet plenty of people who can't imagine finding happiness again after bereavement. But I tell them: 'Never say never.'

Now Richard and I are getting married in September and I just can't wait. And best of all? I know Phil approves.

● For more info on hospices, see [helptehospices.org.uk](http://helptehospices.org.uk).

## WHAT'S THE NEWS?

Your weekly update

### Nurture watch

Is nature or nurture more important in child development? After following 6,700 pairs of twins for 12 years, doctors estimate 60 per cent of characteristics – from IQ to height and weight – are determined by genes. The rest, by the way we're brought up.

### Stressed kids

Around half of under-18s suffer from headaches, and now we know why. Doctors studied 125 children and concluded stress, mostly from schoolwork or bullying, accounted for two-thirds of their headaches.



### Exhausting!

Slaving in the kitchen may be bad for your health. Research shows a small kitchen with a gas cooker and poor ventilation is choked with as much air pollution as a city centre street. The advice is to open your windows or use an extractor fan.

Health editor: Emma Fahlan. Main story: Karen Emmett. What's The News?: Vikki Wilson. Photos: Alamy

**DID YOU KNOW?** Travel sickness happens when there's a conflict between what your eyes see and what your inner ear senses. Women are more susceptible than men, but kids get it worst.



TURN OVER FOR MORE HEALTH



that's life!