

Death

Prisoners were confronted with death every day – they saw their dead and dying fellow prisoners, and they were in constant mortal danger themselves. The pungent smoke from the crematorium also constantly reminded them that violent death was a part of every day life at the concentration camp. Prisoners were clubbed to death, drowned, hung, shot, killed with poison gas or sadistically tortured to death. Prisoners also starved or perished because of the insufficient clothing and housing they received or because of the terrible hygienic conditions to which they were subjected. They died from lack of medical aid or medication or from exhaustion brought on by overwork and the constant maltreatment and harassment. Many lost the will to live and chose to kill themselves by crossing the guard cordon or by touching the electrically charged fence that surrounded the camp.