Dasein is out ahead of itself in terms of its possibilities. It is vital to recognize Heidegger’s point that death is the own most possibility of every Dasein. Heidegger says in The History of the Concept of Time that Dasein must always have possibilities “which it still is not. ... That something is always still outstanding means that the being... is always incomplete.” (The History of the Concept of Time, p. 308) Death is Dasein’s possibility of its impossibility (its non-being) and thus marks Dasein as inherently finite. At the moment of death, Dasein ceases to be Dasein (in being). “But when Dasein is complete, a conclusion which is called /death/, then Dasein is indeed at an end, nothing more is outstanding for it...” (The History of the Concept of Time, p. 308) Death is always an ontical possibility for Dasein, but at the same time, marks through and through the ontological structure of Dasein. It is important to note that Dasein cannot be dead. Dasein will always realize the finality of its being in death, but it cannot move beyond it. People want to escape the idea of and the reality of their own death, which is why when we talk about death in public, we generally avoid the term itself. Instead, we fall into the “they,” das Man, and use phrases like “kicked the bucket,” to express death as some accidental feature not intrinsic to existence itself.

--Vincent Padillav

1. As long as Da-sein is, a not-yet belongs to it, which it will be--what is constantly outstanding.
2. The coming-to-its-end of what is not-yet-at-an-end (in which what is outstanding is liquidated with regard to its being) has the character of no-longer-being-there.
3. Coming-to-an-end implies a mode of being in which the actual Da-sein absolutely cannot be represented by someone else.

Being and Time, Stambaugh translation, p 225. Here Heidegger the ways in which Dasein’s death is always a possibility (no. 1), the no-longer-being-there that is the mark of death as such (no. 2), and the inescapable fact that no one else can step in for Dasein, even in solitude, for Dasein in its being-towards-death (Sein-zum-Tode).

The publicity of everyday being-with-one-another knows death as a constantly occurring event, as a “case of death.” Someone or another “dies,” be it a neighbor or a stranger. People unknown to us “die” daily and hourly. “Death” is encountered as a familiar event occurring within the world. As such, it remains in the inconspicuousness characteristic of everyday encounters. The they has also already secured an interpretation for this event. The “fleeting” talk about this which is either expressed or else mostly kept back says: One also dies at the end, but for now one is not involved.

Being and Time, Stambaugh translation, p 234. Here Haidegger discusses Dasein’s inauthentic relation to death in the public.
Death is the ownmost possibility of Da-sein. Being toward it disclose to Da-sein its ownmost potentiality-of-being in which it is concerned about the being of Da-sein absolutely. Here the fact can become evident to Da-sein that in the eminent possibility of itself it is torn away from the they, that is, anticipation can always already have torn itself away from the they. The understanding of this “ability,” however, first reveals its factical lostness in the everydayness of the they-self.

The ownmost possibility is nonrelational. Anticipation lets Da-sein understand that it has to take over solely from itself the potentiality-of-being in which it is concerned absolutely about its ownmost being. Death does not just “belong” in an undifferentiated way to one’s own Da-sein, but it lays claim on it as something individua. The nonrelational character of death understood in anticipation individualizes Da-sein down to itself. This individualizing is a way in which the “there” is disclosed for existence. It reveals the fact that any being-together with what is taken care of and any being-with the others fails when one’s ownmost potentiality-of-being is at stake. Da-sein can authentically be itself only when it makes that possible of its own accord. But if taking care of things and being concerned fail us, this does not, however, mean at all that these modes of Da-sein have been cut off from its authentic being a self. As essential structures of the constitution of Da-sein they also belong to the condition of the possibility of existence in general. Da-sein is authentically itself only if it projects itself, as being-together with things taken care of and concernful being-with . . ., primarily upon its ownmost potentiality-of-being, rather than upon the possibility of the they-self. Anticipation of its nonrelational possibility forces the being that anticipates into the possibility of taking over its ownmost being of its own accord.

*Being and Time*, Stumbeagh translation, p. 243. Here Heidegger discusses Da-sein’s relation to death as its ownmost possibility.