

Beat: Vips

UPDATE 1 -- American comedian Joan Rivers dead at 81, days after surgery

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USPA News - American comedian Joan Rivers, who was best known for `The Joan Rivers Show` in the early 1990s and more recently the E! celebrity fashion show `Fashion Police`, died Thursday at a hospital in New York City, her daughter said. She was 81 years old.

Rivers died at Mount Sinai Hospital at 1:17 p.m. local time on Thursday, exactly a week after she suddenly stopped breathing while undergoing surgery on her vocal cords at Yorkville Endoscopy Clinic in New York's Upper East Side. She had remained on life support ever since. "It is with great sadness that I announce the death of my mother, Joan Rivers," Melissa Rivers, the daughter of Joan Rivers, said in an e-mailed statement. "She passed peacefully at 1:17 p.m. surrounded by family and close friends. My son and I would like to thank the doctors, nurses, and staff of Mount Sinai Hospital for the amazing care they provided for my mother." Melissa Rivers added: "Cooper and I have found ourselves humbled by the outpouring of love, support, and prayers we have received from around the world. They have been heard and appreciated. My mother's greatest joy in life was to make people laugh. Although that is difficult to do right now, I know her final wish would be that we return to laughing soon." Rivers rose to prominence in the late 1960s, first as a guest on `The Tonight Show` before launching her own rival program, `The Late Show.` She also hosted the successful `Joan Rivers Show` between 1989 and 1993, which earned her a Daytime Emmy for Outstanding Talk Show Host. More recently, Rivers co-hosted the E! celebrity fashion show `Fashion Police` and starred alongside her daughter Melissa in reality TV series `Joan & Melissa: Joan Knows Best`.

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