

## Miscarriage, Still Birth, Loss after Birth

This is the big “D” word that we don’t want to talk about or pretend it doesn’t exist when we think of pregnancy. But, unfortunately, it does from time to time. At the start of each pregnancy we have to remind ourselves that there is no perfect regime that will enable us to have a perfect pregnancy birth and outcome. We have to trust the process and be prepared for all possibilities. How do we cope in the event of miscarriage or death of precious baby in the womb or after birth? What do we say or do, if we know of someone that is experiencing loss? These are hard questions.



These questions can only be answered by individuals in individual circumstances, and by reaching out in tender love. But, this handout is provided as a comfort, not to instill fear but to remind you that you can cope as others have done before you, and to show that you can reach out to those that are hurting.

### A “Mother” Definition

You **are** a mother. We believe we are all mothers, to some extent – with or without children. But, if you have suffered a loss of a child, you are still a mother and feel all the mothering instincts for that child even though they have died in the womb, during or after birth. Here is an excerpt from a book that has been helpful to many women who have suffered loss and dealt with this judgment:

*“If your first pregnancy was also your first loss, you may feel like you don’t qualify to be labeled a “Mother” even those that have living children feel like their title of “Mother” has been taken away with their child. However, nothing could be further from the truth. Your grief is proof of your qualification into Motherhood. You held a life inside of you and you are the only Mother your baby will ever know! You are your baby’s Mother and you will always be a Mother! When Mother’s Day comes around, do something special to remember your baby and the love that you unconditionally showed.” ~ Teardrop Diary by Erin McSparron*

Here is another tip from this great resource:

*“Try not to live up to unrealistic expectation of being “over it” by a certain period of time. Everyone grieves differently and you are on your own personal timetable of healing.”*

We all have unique lives and schedules and issues facing us each day. Struggles and trials will come and go and be overwhelming at times and seem effortless at other times. Take your time to digest what has happened. Understand that this is a process, and be at peace with going through the process in your own timing. Trust that the process will get easier, it will not go away and be forgotten neither will your child, but it will get easier to cope with.

Here are some perfectly normal things you can do during this difficult time:

- Cry with, and/or, for your baby
- Bond with your baby and for your baby
- Take photographs of your beloved child
- Gather keepsakes that will enable you to remember as much as you can
- Name your child, claiming his/her life

If someone you love is experiencing loss, you can volunteer to photograph the baby, tenderly setting up the pose. You can ask about the baby's name and its meaning and other compassionate attempts to simply be there for your friend or relative, sensing what they need in order to cope.

If it is your loss, your feelings will be running rampant and you may feel confused, overwhelmed and pained beyond belief. Acknowledge them, accept them and move with your body's process for grief. Just like in childbirth itself, it will be more uncomfortable if you are trying to "do it" everyone else's way, instead of YOUR way.

This is from the book, *When Hello Means Goodbye*, by Pat Schwiebert, RN and Paul Kirk, MD:

*"Always remember there is a purpose behind the grief process – to allow you formally and appropriately to detach yourself from the relationship you have formed with your baby over the past few months. This is not to say that the process will encourage you to "forget the past". Rather, it will help you to reach the stage where you can remember this experience, understand it, accept it, and then look forward to the future."*

### **How Will I Feel Physically**

- You will be physically exhausted
- Heaviness in your chest or body as a whole
- Loss of appetite
- Shortness of breath
- Breast pain from engorgement

### **Emotions**

Again, in the book, *When Hello Means Goodbye*, they state:

*"You may also feel a sense of alarm and restlessness. C.C. Lewis once wrote, 'No one ever told me that grief felt so like fear.' It will be difficult to settle back to your usual routine."*

To conclude, we would encourage you to have a great support system in place in the event of a loss during your pregnancy. Don't spend too much time on this sad worst case scenario, but be wise and be aware of the possibility and leave it at that. Educate yourself, take the very best

care of yourself and your unborn baby, and trust the process of birth – that is what you can do. If loss occurs, please seek help, comfort and care from individuals you trust and love.

Scriptures for loss, that can comfort you or someone you care about:

“Blessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.” Luke 6:21

“Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. He who continually goes forth weeping, bearing seed for sowing, shall *doubtless* come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.”  
Psalms 126: 5, 6

“Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.” Romans 12:15

“For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him. Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing.” I Thessalonians 5: 9-11

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.” II Corinthians 1: 3, 4.

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.” Jeremiah 29:11

If you have or are experiencing a pregnancy related loss, we encourage you to find someone to talk with. Don't give up if you are having difficulty finding someone sympathetic to talk to, keep trying. If someone you know is experiencing, or has recently lost a baby, just be there for them. Sometimes it means just sitting with someone, or simply holding them while they cry. You don't have to say anything. If you or someone you know seems caught in a cycle of grief and depression, please seek a skilled Counselor for more in depth help in dealing with the situation.

Here are some great websites that might be helpful:

[www.aplacetoremember.com](http://www.aplacetoremember.com) A Place to Remember

[www.stillnomore.org](http://www.stillnomore.org) National Stillborn Society

[www.nowilaymedowntosleep.org](http://www.nowilaymedowntosleep.org) Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep (Photography)

[www.firstcandle.org](http://www.firstcandle.org) First Candle

## Dealing with a Possible Miscarriage:

**Bed rest:** Studies show that “bed rest” isn’t really effective, but it is still a universally practiced response. It is important that a woman not keep going and then feel guilt if things don’t go as you would like. It is also important to not confine yourself to bed rest and start a cycle of depression. Only you can determine what the best course of action for you is.

The following Holistic treatments are for your information only. You are advised to seek the care of a qualified care provider. We do not claim that these options are effective or safe. It is expected that you will do the proper research and investigation, including consulting with a Physician before undertaking any of them.

Herbal treatments can be effective in the case of loss due to hormonal imbalances. Other causes of loss could be: toxin exposure, cervical problems, diseases or conditions, incorrect genetic development of the baby or placenta, as well as others. Most herbal or holistic treatments work to correct the problems of hormonal imbalances, and do little to correct the other possible causes(1).

1. Black Haw Root: ½ cup of infusion daily. Can be used throughout pregnancy.(1)
2. False Unicorn Root: Recommended for women who have miscarried repeatedly. 3 drops of tincture 4-5 times daily. Begin a month before planned conception, can be continued throughout the pregnancy.(1)
3. Vit E, 400 IU daily.(1)
4. Wild Yam Root: take 2-4 ounces every half hour for a threatened miscarriage.
5. Lobelia herb: take a few sips of leaf and seed tea every few minutes for an hour for threatened miscarriage. Rest for an hour, and then repeat. Tincture can be less nauseating, take no more than 15 drops in a few sips of water every 15 min. Can be continued for several days if needed.(1)

If you have bleeding that fills more than a pad in an hour, painful cramping, a temperature, backache or symptoms that continue for several days without resolution, seek the care of a Physician. In order to monitor your situation, an ultrasound might need to be performed, or blood hCG levels monitored. We can support with some testing. We also encourage you to pursue support from family, friends, religious group and/or grief support group.

If you are a woman with a Rh incompatibility, be aware that you should ask your Physician about a Rhogam treatment.