

One Women Shares...

Pregnancy loss is different than loss of a child, it's just as painful, but people treat you differently. My sister-in-law has gone through my losses with me and has not yet realized that I mourn each one as deeply as she mourns the loss of her 11 month old son; they are children to me every bit as much as he was to her. The hardest thing I found to deal with was the speed with which people expect you to bounce back, move on, and put it behind you. When you cry at the time, that's accepted. When you're blue a few days later, that's ok, but then you should be back into your normal routine, back to real life. But real life for you and your husband now includes this incredible nameless, faceless, empty space. I ached for something I couldn't put a name to, wanted something and wasn't sure what it was, and I suffered intense pain for a long time. My mother said, "Don't dwell on it." My sister wanted to take me shopping – I wanted to say goodbye. Eventually I stopped talking about my feelings, went on with the day-to-day stuff and did resume "normal" life. I found out about available support groups and took care of me. My husband eventually talked about it with a friend and I think it helped him.

Websites that might be helpful:

<http://www.sands.org.au>
<http://hygeia.org/form1.htm>
<http://www.nmha.org/infoctr/factsheets/42.cfm>
<http://www.idreamofbaby.com/loss.php>
<http://www.modimes.org/pnhec/572.asp>
<http://www.baby-place.com/miscarriage.htm>
<http://www.gentlebirth.org/archives/griefLoss.html>
<http://www.missfoundation.org/family/index.html>
<http://www.angelfire.com/journal2/forgottengrief/forparentspage6.html>
<http://www.postpartum.net>
<http://depression.about.com/od/griefchildloss/>
<http://www.compassionatefriends.org/>

Coping With Pregnancy Loss



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During this time, you are probably overwhelmed with questions about your situation and this sudden and unexpected loss. Do not hesitate to contact your personal physician if you need medical assistance at any time. You may also call the Scott & White On Call Nurse at (254)724-7037 or (800)724-7037 if you have any questions, or if you would just like to speak to a nurse. The Scott & White On Call Nurse hotline is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Just so you know, common reactions to pregnancy loss may include:

- Uncontrollable crying,
- Problems sleeping,
- Nightmares,
- Aches, or pains in your breasts or abdomen,
- Irritability,
- Weakness,
- Dizziness,
- Poor appetite,
- Poor sex drive.

It is common for people to experience grief after a pregnancy loss. Parents are often shocked and ask “Why Us?”

Grief, or bereavement, is the mourning process a person goes through after the loss of a loved one. It is an intense emotion or feeling experienced after a significant loss, consisting of several overlapping stages.

The stages of grief are: denial, emotional release, anger, and acceptance. Some stages may take longer than others, be experienced out of order, be skipped completely, or be repeated. Each person will deal with loss in their own way.

Feeling sad or angry at this time is natural. Allow yourself to feel sad rather than pretend that nothing has happened. Cry if you feel like it. Crying helps the body relax and it helps the mind get rid of anxiety. Unfortunately people experience many types of bad feelings with grief. You may want to consider talking to a therapist if you feel overwhelmed by them.

Some things that have helped other grieving parents deal with their loss were naming their baby, having a private ceremony at home, or keeping a diary.

Men and women grieve differently. Talk to each other about your feelings but respect your differences, and listen to each other as well. It might be best not to make any major life decisions right now, such as job changes or moves. Help each other explain the situation to family and friends and accept help if you are in a position to do so. Schedule plenty of time for rest. Be patient with each other while you each deal with this.

It is important to distinguish normal grief from clinical depression, a condition that requires medical treatment. Approximately 20% of grieving

people develop major depression. So you should allow yourself to grieve, but be aware that you should gradually make your way through the stages of grief and be able to reach acceptance of your loss.

Seek professional help if you experience symptoms of prolonged sadness, tearfulness, sleeping too much or too little, are preoccupied with recurring thoughts of death, or experience symptoms that effect your daily functioning or ability to care for yourself.

