

PREGNANCY LOSS

March of Dimes • University of South Florida • Florida Department of Health

We are so saddened to learn of your loss. We know this is not easy for you and you may not know how to feel. That's okay. Many parents feel shock, denial, grief, and even anger. It is all right to feel this way and no one will blame you. It will get better. You are not alone. Soon you will find lots of people and programs to help you. You may want to join a support group. We hope this information is helpful for you. We wish you all the best.

Why did this happen?

- Pregnancy loss is very common and many times the cause is not known.
- Sometimes a baby is lost because he or she was born with birth defects or born too early. Other times we simply do not know the cause.
- Most probably there is nothing that you or your doctor could have done to prevent it.
- It is important for you to remember that you did not do anything wrong during pregnancy to cause this to happen.
- Your doctor will discuss with you the possible reasons for your loss. If you have had more than one loss, your doctor may need to consider (look into) other possible causes.

How will I cope?

- Try not to feel alone. You and your partner should support one another.
- Take one day at a time.
- Take care of yourself.
- Your clergyman may be a good source of help and support.
- You may want to think about joining a support group.
- Many parents find it helpful to create memories of the baby they have lost.

Should we try again?

- Give yourself time to make the right decision for you.
- Talk to your partner.
- Be positive. Every pregnancy is different.
- Talk to your doctor about how long you should wait. Your doctor can tell you if your body is ready to try again.

What can I do to reduce the risk of losing another pregnancy?

There are a few steps you can take to reduce the risk of losing a pregnancy:

- Take a multivitamin with folic acid everyday. It is important to take it before and during pregnancy. It may help prevent certain birth defects.
- Do not smoke.
- Do not drink alcohol and limit caffeine (coffee, caffeinated soft drinks, tea).
- Exercise and eat healthy.
- Manage stress.
- Keep weight in healthy limits.
- Make sure you are not exposed to radiation or poisons (arsenic, lead, formaldehyde) at work or anywhere else.
- Check out all medications with your doctor.
- Treat and control any health conditions (diabetes, high blood pressure).
- Ask your doctor about talking to a genetic counselor before you become pregnant.
A genetic counselor can:
 - help you understand what we know about pregnancy loss
 - explain about your chance of having another baby
 - tell you about support groups where you live.

Where can I go for help?

- Talk to your doctor or the hospital social worker about counseling services and support groups in your area.

Other Resources

- AMEND: Aiding a Mother & Father Experiencing Neonatal Death-www.amendgroup.com
- A Place to Remember: www.aplacetoremember.com
- Grief Recovery Institute: 1-818-907-9600 www.grief-recovery.com
- March of Dimes: visit marchofdimes.com
- National SIDS/Infant Death Resource Center: 1-866-866-7437

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