

Pregnancy loss

The death of a child is one of the most painful experiences a mother and father can have. Stillbirth is a sad reality for many families, which are very emotionally affected.



For many parents, fetal death is a loss that comes as an unexpected shock. In fact, up to half of all fetal deaths occur in seemingly uncomplicated pregnancies. This document provides information on how you can support parents who have just experienced the loss of a baby.

Symptoms of miscarriage

Sometimes there are no symptoms of a miscarriage. In that case, the news would be received after an ultrasound is performed. When symptoms are present, the most common are vaginal bleeding or spotting, severe abdominal pain and severe cramping. In case of these symptoms, you should immediately contact your obstetrician-gynecologist.

Stages of the grieving process

The first step is to understand that a mother and father may go through several stages after the loss of a baby. Knowing what these stages are can help you find the best way to provide support.

- **Denial:** They may go through brief periods in which they forget what happened or simply cannot get the idea that it really happened.
- **Guilt:** Mothers go over and over what they could have done differently to prevent the loss of the baby.
- **Anger:** They are overcome with a sense of injustice and will become angry at anyone around them.
- **Depression:** After passing the previous stages, depression may set in. Some of the symptoms could be loss of interest or pleasure in daily activities, changes in eating habits or excessive rest, difficulty concentrating and making decisions. If these symptoms persist or worsen, it is important to contact a mental health professional.
- **Longing:** Mothers and fathers begin to long to be with their baby. They wonder what she would look like today and what she would be doing if she were with them.



Recommendations to help people who have experienced a pregnancy loss

1

Be supportive: The best thing you can do is simply be present and supportive. It is difficult to understand exactly what the parents are going through, but receiving their support will be very helpful. Families need the people they love most; spending time with them or calling them may be beneficial.

2

Listen: Show your support by listening to them; this includes hearing them repeat many times, “What would have happened, if such and such...” if they had...”

3

Be attentive: Pay attention to the person's changes and the conversations you have.

4

Convey reassurance: Communicate that all those emotions they are feeling are normal and are part of the process. Also, remind them that it is healthy to allow themselves to grieve, share emotions with others, and give themselves time to heal.

5

Offer help: A situation as complicated as the loss of a baby may make them uninterested in performing basic tasks. You can offer to help them with these tasks.

6

Encourage communication: Some parents will isolate themselves and insist that they want to be alone. Try to encourage open conversation so they can express their feelings.

7

Acceptance: After a while, they will move into the acceptance stage, and although they will always remember the pregnancy they lost, even though they will continue with their regular routine.

Seek professional help

Sometimes it is appropriate to seek professional help. If after a few weeks the symptoms continue, it is advisable to contact a mental health professional to manage the grief.

Social and Emotional Aspect

For recommendations, tools and resources on how you and your family can cope with the emotional and physical concerns that follow a pregnancy loss, please visit your primary care physician or contact the following phone lines:

Medical Advice Line

1-844-347-7801

TTY/TDD 1-844-347-7804

Customer Service:

1-844-347-7800

APS Healthcare

787-641-9133

References:

<https://www.plannedparenthood.org/es/temas-de-salud/embarazo/aborto-espontaneo/como-se-si-estoy-teniendo-un-aborto-espontaneo>

<https://espanol.breastpumps.byramhealthcare.com/blog/2018/10/05/support-pregnancy-loss>

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