Practical Suggestions for Parents Whose Baby Has Died
- due to miscarriage, stillbirth or early infant death -

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• Information/Education – find out everything you can about what happened to your baby. Buy a notebook; create a file.
• Ask questions.
• Include your other children in the family grief, including the visitation and funeral ceremony.
• Find out what you need to do now to take care of yourself for the future.
• Talk to others – especially those who have also had a baby die – share your feelings.
• Journal.
• Write a letter to your baby.
• Create a memory book or memory box. You'll be surprised what special things you do have that can now be keepsakes: cards, notes, items from the hospital, special things purchased in anticipation of the birth, flowers which can be dried, a ribbon from a floral arrangement, etc.
• Include the baby in family celebrations by: talking about him or her, having something displayed which represents the memory of the child such as a candle, flower, plant or picture.
• Put away the baby things when YOU are ready, not when others tell you “it’s time.”
• Be ready for “helpful” comments of others (UGH!):
  “You can always have another…”
  “At least you have your other children.”
  “It’s better it happened now than after several years when you really knew your child.”
  “This is a blessing...things probably would have been worse if it hadn’t happened now.”
Also, the focus of concern is usually exclusively toward the mom, not the dad.
• Nurture your relationship with your spouse/partner.
• Seek a support group.
• Take your time making decisions.
• Try to eat, sleep and get exercise.

• Embrace, renew or establish your faith.

• Pray.

• Be prepared for the “residuals” which will trigger your grief emotions to surface unexpectedly, such as:
  
  - Mom’s post-pregnant body, including her milk coming in
  - People who don’t know about the death of your baby
  - Junk mail advertising baby items
  - Commercials
  - Seeing pregnant women and families with babies
  - The inevitable question: “How many children do you have?”
  - Holidays

• Remember that there is no right or wrong time to: name your baby; create a memory book or box; start a journal; write a letter; put away or display reminders; cry…