

The Miscarriage Association



acknowledging pregnancy loss

We are sorry
that you had
a miscarriage

What you want to know

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Your feelings

"I feel very upset and sad. Is this normal?"

Yes, it is.

You might have been scared when you started to bleed.

Often, nothing can stop it happening.

This can worry you.

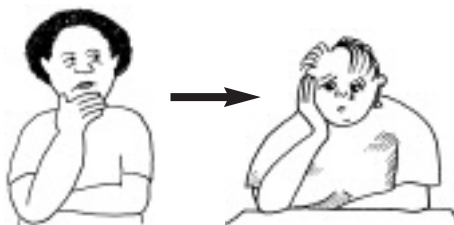


Some women get over this quickly.

Other women take a long time.

Some women feel OK at the time but are very sad later on.

All of these women are normal.



You have lost a baby.

It's normal to feel sad and to cry.

You might never forget the baby you lost but the sadness will get better.



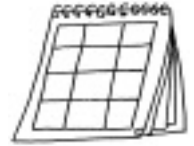
Here are some feelings women have after a miscarriage.

Some women might not feel the same as you but you might have some of these feelings –

- You might feel shock
- You might feel angry
- You might feel sad and cry a lot
- You might feel lonely
- You might feel empty
- You might not be interested in things any more
- You might feel tired all the time
- You might sleep too much
- You might not be able to get to sleep
- You might feel guilty
- You might feel you have failed
- You might not want to have sex
- You might not be able to concentrate on anything
- You might want to talk about it all the time
- You might find talking about it makes you too sad
- You might feel sad and jealous when you see a woman who is having a baby or babies or children's things



Sometimes these feelings come back a long time after the miscarriage.



This could be on the day the baby was going to be born.

Or it might be a year after the miscarriage.



It can help to talk about your feelings with someone who cares about you.

You could talk to –

- Your husband or your partner
- A family member
- A close friend
- Someone who had a miscarriage
- Or you could talk to someone at The Miscarriage Association (☎ 01924 200799)



Other people's feelings

Your husband or partner

- He might feel upset because you are upset.
- He might be sad about the loss of your baby.
- He might find it hard to show his feelings.
- He might find it hard to understand how it feels because he has not been pregnant.
- He might not have seen a scan or felt the baby kick.
- He might feel guilty because he made you pregnant.
- Both of you might feel very sad.
- It's hard to help someone else when you feel sad yourself.
- Your man might not show his feelings because he does not want to upset you.
- You might think he doesn't care.
- He might think you will be back to normal before you are ready.



It can help if you can talk to each other about how you feel.

This can help you to understand each other.

If you can't do this it can help to talk to someone else.



Children

Children can often tell if something is wrong and you are upset.

Try to talk to them about what happened if they know you were expecting a baby.



Grandparents and others in your family

Other people in your family might feel sad about the loss of your baby.

They might try to comfort you.

Sometimes they might say the wrong things.

They might not understand how you feel.

They might even blame you.

They might not know that you can't stop a miscarriage.

Try to show them this book.



Some people don't like to talk about miscarriage. Why?

Some people don't like to see you sad and upset.

They might try to cheer you up.

They hope this will help you get over the miscarriage.

Often they don't understand how you feel.

This might make them say things that upset you.

These are some things that people say that might upset you –

- You can always have another baby.
- Maybe there was something wrong with the baby.
- Maybe it was because you did something wrong.
- Maybe it was because you ate the wrong food.
- It wasn't really a baby - just a blob.

Talk to someone who knows how you feel when you are upset about what someone has said.

This might be someone who had a miscarriage.



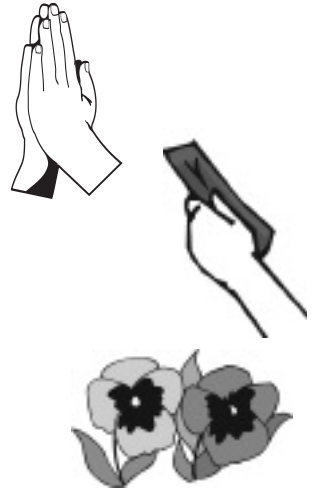
How to remember the baby you lost

You might want to do something to remember your baby.



You might want to say goodbye to the baby.

- Some parents say prayers.
- Some parents give money to a charity.
- Some parents plant flowers or a tree.



Do what feels OK for you.

Sometimes you can get a scan picture of the baby.

Ask the hospital staff about this.



Your health

Your doctor might say you need a small operation after the miscarriage.



It will take away anything that is left in your womb.

Sometimes this can be done with pills.



You will not need to have treatment if your womb is already empty.

How long will I bleed?

This can go on for 2 weeks.

Sometimes it's not as long as this.



If you have pain it will get less each day.

Tell your doctor –

- If the bleeding gets worse.
- If the pain gets worse.
- If you have a discharge (wetness) from your vagina and it smells.
- If you have a high temperature.

Your doctor needs to know about these.

They might mean you have an infection.



It's best to use pads
for the bleeding.



Do not use tampons.



It's best not to have sex
till the bleeding stops



Can I have a bath or shower?

Yes you can.

And you can wash your hair.



It's best not to swim
till the bleeding stops.



When will I get my next period?

Your next period will come 4 or 5 or 6 weeks after the miscarriage.



You might have more bleeding than in your usual period.



You could get pregnant before your next period.



If your period has not come after 6 weeks

and if you have had sex



it's best to have a pregnancy test.



Is it safe to get pregnant so soon?

It's best to wait till you have had one period.



This makes it easier to check how long you have been pregnant.

Your doctor will tell you if you need to wait a bit longer to get better.



When is the best time to try again?

The best time to try again is when you both feel ready.



You might want to wait till –

- you feel really well
- you don't feel so sad about the miscarriage.



What else do I need to know?

If your miscarriage was late in the pregnancy –

- Your breasts might stay larger.
- Your breasts might leak milk for a few days or longer.



This might upset you.



A good bra that supports your breasts will help you feel less sore.



Take a painkiller (like paracetamol) if your breasts are painful.

Ask your doctor or midwife for advice.



Getting back to normal

Take things easy till you feel well again.



This might take a few weeks.



Talk to your doctor if you are worried about not feeling better.



What about work or housework?

You might find it hard to face going back to work or doing the housework.



You might find it hard to concentrate on the jobs.



You might not want to see people at first.



You might find it helps to go back to work and to be with people who are kind to you.

You might find it helps to get back into a daily routine at home or at work.



Do what is best for you.



What makes people have a miscarriage?

Was it something I did?

Nobody can say for certain what makes people have a miscarriage.

It's not likely that it's anything you did or anything you didn't do.



Is it because I didn't stay in bed when I started to bleed?

Staying in bed wouldn't have stopped your miscarriage if it happened in the first 3 or 4 months.

Lying down can slow down bleeding but it won't stop a miscarriage.

Once a miscarriage starts you can't stop it.



Does it mean I won't ever be able to have a baby?

You still have a good chance of having a baby even after several miscarriages.

Is it because it was a boy?

It's possible for you to carry a boy or a girl.

Miscarriage doesn't happen just because it was a boy.



Why do people have a miscarriage?

- Half of all miscarriages are because the baby doesn't grow and can't live.
- Women who have periods that don't come at the same time each month are more likely to have a miscarriage.
- Sometimes the mother's blood can't get to the baby in the womb. This can make it hard for the baby to grow.
- A very high temperature and some illnesses and infections (like German Measles) can cause a miscarriage. Coughs and colds do not hurt the baby.
- The cervix (neck of the womb) might start to open too soon as the baby gets heavier. This can be because the cervix is weak. This can make a miscarriage happen.

- There might not be enough room for the baby to grow if the womb is an odd shape.
- Large fibroids (lumps in the womb) can cause miscarriage late in the pregnancy.
- Sometimes the baby starts to grow in the wrong place and not in the womb.
- Something might go wrong with the fertilised egg (the beginning of the baby). The womb gets ready for the baby but the baby doesn't grow.

What happens next?

Will I have any more treatment?

You might have a follow-up appointment at the hospital.



If you don't have an appointment at the hospital – ask to see your doctor or health visitor if you are worried or want to ask questions.



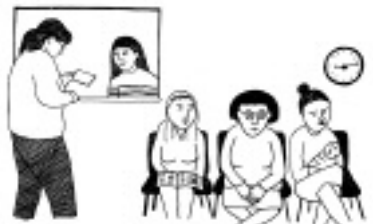
I want to wait before I get pregnant again.

When should I start using contraceptives?

After the miscarriage you can get pregnant if you have sex before your first period.



Go to your family planning clinic as soon as you can.



How can I get ready for another pregnancy?

- ✓ Take care of yourself.
- ✓ Eat healthy foods.
- ✓ Get some exercise every day.
- ✓ Doctors say it's good to take folic acid (vitamin pills) before you try for a baby and early in the pregnancy. Ask your local chemist for advice.



I worry in case I have another miscarriage.

Many women feel like this.

If you get pregnant
take it one day at a time.

Tell yourself "I'm OK so far".

Talk to people you trust.

It can help to share your feelings and worries
with somebody else.

You can ask your doctor or midwife
for an early scan.



Where can I get more help?

It can help to talk to somebody who knows about miscarriage.



The Miscarriage Association will listen to you and answer your questions.

You can phone them on ☎ 01924 200799.



There is an answer-phone if you call when the office is shut.



Or you can talk to your own doctor or your midwife or your health visitor.



We hope we've helped you.

Having a miscarriage can make you sad and upset.

But you don't have to feel lonely.



Lots of women you know might have had a miscarriage.



Some of them will want to help you.

And we hope this book has helped you.



Thanks

Thank you to the Department of Health.
They paid for this book.

Thank you to Jane Fraser.
She helped to write the words in this book.





**The Miscarriage Association
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Tel: 01924 200799
www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk**

Thanks to CHANGE for pictures from the Health Picture Bank

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