

**Help and advice for a
further pregnancy...
after a loss.**



Little Things & Co.

The baby bereavement charity

Help and advice for a further pregnancy... after a loss.

The advice provided is taken directly from other parents who have experienced such a loss and gone on to become pregnant again.

Only you and your partner know your story and your life. But the following are our guidelines to help you in your journey.

Both parents

- Allow yourself time to grieve for the child who has died. It can be easy to rush into another pregnancy when you have aching arms, but it is important to process your grief and allow yourself time to heal, both physically and emotionally.
- Prepare yourselves that it may not happen quickly. The body needs time to process the previous pregnancy and the traumatic emotional event that has happened. But also prepare that you may become pregnant again very quickly. Only begin trying to conceive again when you are sure you are ready. Do not take chances with contraception.
- Be prepared for a different experience to pregnancy this time. Many people enter pregnancy not fathoming that a baby can die. Sadly, once you have experienced such a loss it is hard to get back the innocence of an unblemished pregnancy. Your worry and anxiety could be heightened significantly, after the death of a baby.
- Ensure every medical professional that is caring for you in your next pregnancy knows about your previous loss. This can help them to alleviate some of your concerns and be aware why you may be anxious. All your notes should contain a sticker showing that you have suffered a loss.
- Take time every day to relax and acknowledge the pregnancy. This can mean just stopping for five minutes to take in the new pregnancy. It is easy to be anxious and impatient for your new baby to arrive, but by taking quiet time you are allowing yourself to process and connect with this pregnancy.
- You may find yourself struggling to get excited. Or as excited as you did with your last pregnancy. That is understandable. This is your human survival mode. Your mind is tricking you into thinking that if you do not get excited it would not be as hard if the same happened again. This is a false idea. You deserve to enjoy this pregnancy. It will understandably be difficult but take the time to think of the future. There is no harm in imagining your baby here and in your arms safely. Let yourself run with that thought and smile to yourself.
- Remember to put your welfare and that of your baby first. Do not worry if you make more frequent trips to your midwife, Doctor or hospital. If you feel there is an important reason to have your baby's movements checked then go. You may feel like you are bothering people or being troublesome but if it helps to alleviate your concerns then get checked out!
- Voice your concerns. The age-old adage that a 'problem shared' is true. By talking your concerns through with your partner or confidante you are expressing yourself. Be honest. We know that nothing anyone can say will completely eradicate the feelings but sharing your thoughts can help.
- Do not feel bad if you do not feel 'fixed'. Both of your babies, the one who died and your new pregnancy are individuals. One cannot replace the other. Because you have a new baby, you will not instantly mend your grief or feelings towards your baby who died. You may find other people will assume your new baby instantly repairs any grief you have. It does not. Allow yourself your love for your new child, but do not feel forced to suppress your grief. It is not a trade and the two can go hand in hand. Feelings of disloyalty are not uncommon, but you do not have to choose between your babies. They are both a part of you.





For Mum

Speak to your Midwife about your birthing plan well in advance. Talk through where and the details. For example, if you do not wish to be in the same delivery suite make sure this is mentioned early on and it is made very clear.

Take care of your body and mind. Spend time massaging your bump and getting to know your new shape and new baby. Play music to your baby as you relax, creating a link between you with sound. Talk to your bump and make a connection. Whatever the future brings this is your child and your bond is a wonderful thing between you.

For Dad

Remember that although your partner is the person carrying the baby during the pregnancy the two babies are yours too. Your grief and emotions towards this pregnancy are just as valid. It is easy to take on the caregiver role, but self-care is as important as tending to your partner.

Ensure you discuss as a couple if your partner has requests. When labour begins it can get very busy so make sure you know what she wants, what you want and that the professionals caring for you know what is required.

Take time to bond with your child. Ask your partner if you can massage her bump, read to the baby or play music. Create a connection between baby and daddy. Whatever the future brings this is your child and your bond is a wonderful thing.

When your baby arrives

Do not be alarmed if you become confused during or after labour. Many women report that they struggled to identify which baby they were delivering. If you elect to have certain medication during labour it can become confusing. Talk beforehand about how your birthing partner can help you to identify that this is your new baby.

It is often the case that new parents report struggling to bond with their new baby. Please do not feel bad about this as it is a natural feeling. It can be hard to accept that you now have a healthy baby and that this baby will not die. Allow yourself time to adjust and do not force yourself to bond. It will come naturally but do not pressurise yourself too much to make things perfect.

You may find those around you assume that your life is now 'fixed' and that you are instantly happy. This is unlikely to the case. Your love for your child who has died will always be present and having another child does not diminish that.

You may find some do not mention your child who has died so be honest if you do want to acknowledge them and their role in your family. After a baby dies our world changes forever. We must adjust to an altered reality. Your new baby is here and safe. But that does not mean life is perfect now. You are human and allow yourself time to process your new life.

Rainbow Baby

*A baby born after a loss is named a 'Rainbow baby'. A beautiful and bright rainbow follows a storm and gives hope of better days. ... A rainbow baby brings light but by no means replaces the baby that has died. *

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This leaflet is prepared to offer help and advice. If there is anything you would like to discuss about this leaflet or that we can help you with, please do not hesitate to get in touch.



This booklet has been prepared and sponsored by Little Things & Co. – The baby bereavement charity.

Little Things & Co. is a registered charity (1165463) who provide emotional and practical support to anyone suffering the loss of a baby.

Little Things & Co. believes the bereavement care after losing a child should be seamless, thoughtful and helpful.

If you would like to discuss anything you have read within this booklet please do not hesitate to get in touch.

To find out more about the work they do visit **www.ltandco.org** or email **info@ltandco.org**

