

cope well at the time and feel a great sadness engulfs them later. You have lost a baby, you are bound to feel sad and you need time to grieve. Don't expect too much of yourself. You will never forget the baby you lost but the pain will get easier. You will find things difficult around the time the baby would have been born. Don't keep feelings bottled up, sharing your emotions with your partner will help.

MY PARTNER DOES NOT SEEM TO BE GRIEVING - WHY?

He probably is. Men and women express their emotions differently and it is important to share your thoughts and feelings. The events surrounding a miscarriage are difficult for your partner as he probably feels inadequate and powerless to help the one he loves. Many men also suffer a degree of shock, anger, disappointment and a misplaced sense of guilt. Adjusting to the loss of a baby takes time.

MY FRIENDS SEEM TO PRETEND MY MISCARRIAGE HASN'T HAPPENED - WHY?

Many people avoid the subject with you because they don't know what to say and don't want to upset you. Obviously this makes you feel isolated and hurt. If you can refer to your miscarriage in conversation it opens up the opportunity for your friends to say 'I'm sorry you lost your baby'.

I'M WORRIED ABOUT GETTING PREGNANT AGAIN - WHAT CAN I DO?

It's inevitable you will worry during another pregnancy. Take it one day or one week at a time. Talk to your partner, friends or GP about your fears.

If you wish, you can record your baby's name in the Book of Remembrance at St. Anne's Cathedral, Belfast.

THE ULSTER HOSPITAL MISCARRIAGE SUPPORT

If you would like to talk to someone else who has had a miscarriage and who will understand how you feel, please contact the Local Miscarriage Support Group. We meet monthly in the Jaffe ward seminar room, Ulster Hospital at 8.00p.m. For further details contact Tel: (028) 9055 0453

COMMUNITY MIDWIFE

Following the loss of your baby your community midwife is available for support when you are home. She can be contacted by phoning (028) 9056 3371 between 10.00a.m. - 3.00p.m. Monday - Friday to arrange for her to call.

There is no time limit to this service.



MISCARRIAGE INFORMATION

ULSTER COMMUNITY & HOSPITAL TRUST

We are sorry you have suffered a miscarriage and that you have gone through a physically unpleasant, upsetting and confusing time. It's normal to go through a period of grieving. You may find help by sharing your feelings with your partner as you can be a source of comfort to each other.

WHY DID I MISCARRY?

It is usually impossible to find a reason for any individual miscarriage, but we do know that, in at least a third of miscarriages, there is something wrong with the pregnancy, either with the baby or the growing placenta. The development is so complex in the early weeks perhaps it would be surprising if a high percentage of pregnancies did **NOT** end in miscarriage. Whatever the cause, the hurt is exactly the same. No-one is to blame.

WAS IT ANYTHING I DID?

Very unlikely. A normal pregnancy is hard to dislodge, but we do know that smoking, poor diet and alcohol can affect pregnancy and even cause miscarriage if taken to excess.

WILL MY MISCARRIAGE AFFECT OUR CHANCES OF ANOTHER BABY?

The miscarriage itself does not affect further pregnancies as long as some

medical reason is not found. If a medical reason is found you would be advised of any treatment you might require. In the majority of cases though the following pregnancy is healthy and uneventful.

HOW LONG SHOULD WE WAIT BEFORE TRYING AGAIN?

Seek advice and then decide with your partner what you feel is best. It is perfectly acceptable to try again after one normal period, but you yourself will know when you feel ready to try again. Some women like to try again quickly while others prefer to wait a while.

HOW SOON CAN I RESUME NORMAL ACTIVITY?

This varies from person to person. You will probably feel physically and emotionally low for at least a week so it is wise to take things easy. Your physical strength will return gradually and you will then feel able to resume normal activities and perhaps return to work. Your GP will advise you if you are concerned.

MY BREASTS ARE UNCOMFORTABLE WHAT CAN I DO?

Tender breasts are not uncommon following a late miscarriage. This is distressing and a constant reminder of the baby you lost. Usually this settles after a few days. wear

a well supporting bra and if it does not settle quickly please consult your doctor.

COULD YOU KNOW THE SEX OF THE BABY?

If you miscarry before 14-16 weeks it is almost impossible to tell. After that is become progressively easier to tell. In some hospitals photographs **MAY** be taken after 16 weeks and may be kept in your notes.

HOW LONG WILL I BLEED FOR, FOLLOWING MY MISCARRIAGE?

Bleeding may be moderate to heavy initially. After the first couple of days it should reduce to a light stain which may last up to ten days. Use of tampons is not advisable during this time and also during the first period following a miscarriage.

WHEN WILL MY PERIODS RETURN?

Periods usually return four to six weeks after your miscarriage. Do not be alarmed if this period is heavier than normal, it is not unusual to have a heavy loss with clots.

IT IS WEEKS SINCE MY MISCARRIAGE BUT I'M STILL UPSET - IS THIS NORMAL?

Yes. Some women recover quickly and others take a long time. Some women