

## The Emotions of Loss

*Pregnancy and infant loss is devastating, no matter when it occurs or what the circumstances. It is important to allow yourself to grieve. During the grieving process some emotions might pass quickly, while others may last for long periods of time and you might skip others completely.*

*After your loss, you may experience:*

- **Denial.** It may seem impossible to understand what has happened. You may find yourself in shock or disbelief.
- **Guilt.** You may question if you could have done anything to prevent the loss of your baby.
- **Anger.** No matter the reason, you might be angry at yourself, your spouse or partner, your doctor, or a higher power. You may also feel anger toward the unfairness of your loss.
- **Envy.** You may feel strong envy toward other parents. It may feel as though babies and pregnant women are everywhere you look.
- **Yearning.** You may experience feelings of extreme longing and desire to be with your baby. You might also imagine what you would be doing with your baby now.
- **Depression.** You may develop symptoms of depression, such as loss of interest or pleasure in normal activities, changes in your usual eating or sleeping routines, and trouble concentrating and making decisions.

## Reid Health's Support Group Meeting Information

*No registration necessary.*

Reid Health's Perinatal & Infant Loss Support Group meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m. in Classroom C at the hospital.

The time and location of the meetings may change occasionally, therefore if it is your first time attending, the weather is questionable, or you travel a long distance to attend, please call the Reid Family Birthing Center at the number below to confirm the time and location of the meeting.

*Many other local, regional, and national organizations exist to provide counseling and support to families in times of pregnancy and infant loss.*

### Local Support:

Indiana Cuddle Cot Campaign  
Still Breathing Facebook Support Group

### Regional Support:

Sufficient Grace Ministries of SW Ohio  
Neofight of the Indianapolis area

### National Support:

Grieving Parents Support Network  
SHARE Pregnancy and Infant Loss Support  
Star Legacy Foundation



**Reid Health**  
Right beside you.

1100 Reid Parkway  
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Family Birthing Center: (765) 983-3020  
ReidHealth.org



**Reid Health**  
Perinatal & Infant  
Loss Support

## Perinatal & Infant Loss Support

Reid Health understands the importance of bereavement support. Staff specially trained in Resolve Through Sharing® (RTS) bereavement support are available to provide parents and loved ones with care and guidance. With your written consent, this support begins during your time of loss and continues through your grieving process in the weeks, months and years ahead. If you still need to provide consent, please contact Stephanie Nicholson, the RTS Bereavement Coordinator, by calling the Family Birthing Center.

Grief is a normal process when a loss occurs. Our goal is to support parents and loved ones in dealing with the emotions that are experienced when loss during pregnancy or infant loss occurs.

Reid Health's Perinatal & Infant Loss Support Group is facilitated by trained staff who have had experience in support after pregnancy loss. The group offers a respectful and supportive setting for gaining insight and sharing feelings. You may find that attending this group helps you navigate your grief process.

*Meetings are offered at no charge.*

## The Healing Process

You might experience setbacks, such as feelings of anger or guilt well after you thought you had moved on. Certain situations, such as attending a baby shower or seeing a new baby, might be difficult. This is not uncommon. Excuse yourself from possible painful situations until you're ready to handle them. With time and the process of grieving, comes healing.

If feelings of depression seem prolonged or you're having trouble completing your usual daily activities, consult a grief counselor or other mental health provider for professional support.

## Memorials

Reid Health has a Memorial Garden, where you are welcome anytime. This garden acts as the final resting place for the ashes of the tiniest losses from our community. An annual memorial service is held in the fall to remember your little ones at the Memorial Garden.

During the holiday season, the Golay Chapel on the second floor of Reid Health displays a tree as a memorial to Perinatal & Infant Loss. The tree is decorated with angel ornaments, representing each baby lost in the past year.



Looking out over the third pond on the Reid Health campus, the Memorial Garden offers a quiet space for family and loved ones to visit.

## Suggestions

*Create memories of your baby.* This includes naming your baby, taking photos, holding a memorial service, personalizing a piece of jewelry, planting a tree or creating another memorial in your baby's honor.

*Talk with your partner.* Know that everyone experiences grief differently. One of you may feel the need to talk about the baby and express emotions, while the other may prefer to be isolated. Be open and honest with each other as you cope with your feelings.

*Make your own decisions.* Well-meaning friends or loved ones may suggest clearing out all reminders of your baby, but the decision is up to you. If you're not ready, take as much time as you need.

*Seek help from others.* Friends and loved ones may not know what to say or how to help. Tell them when you need their support. If you want to talk about the baby or if you'd like help keeping the baby's memory alive, tell your friends and loved ones how you feel.

*Take it slow.* If you're overwhelmed thinking about the future, focus on getting through one day at a time. You will have good days and bad days. If you can, wait to make major decisions, such as moving, changing jobs or buying a home.

*Take care of yourself.* Get adequate rest, eat a healthy diet and include physical activity in your daily routine. Take medications under the guidance of your doctor.

*Keep a journal.* Putting your thoughts and feelings on paper might be helpful in expressing your pain. You might also write letters, notes or poems about — or even to — your baby.

*Join a support group.* Sharing with others who've experienced pregnancy loss, either in person or online, can be comforting. Clergy members may be another source of support and counseling. Your baby's grandparents or other loved ones might also benefit from this type of support.