

Saying Good-bye

How do you Say Good-bye?

How do you say good-bye to not only a dream, but a part of you? How do you say good-bye to one so young and small, who lived such a short time - perhaps only in the mother's womb?

"It was really hard. When I saw Brian, I knew. I knew I had to say good-bye, but I hadn't said hello yet. I had to say that I loved him before I could even think about him going."

There is no one right way for you to say your good-bye. This is a time when **your** choices and needs should be met. This is your opportunity to do what would bring you comfort.

You may want to name your baby. Parents have given names even when the loss occurs very early in the pregnancy. The name you choose for your baby should be one that comes from your heart. The name may be one that you had considered as soon as you knew you were pregnant, or you may change your mind. Whatever name you choose should come from deep within your heart because that name-deep in your heart will always be baby's name. Part of giving baby a name helps to create an identity for him or her. If the sex of your baby is not known, you can choose one that would fit either one.

Again, if your heart tells you that your baby is a girl for example, choose a name for a girl.



Sometimes parents write their baby a letter, poem or song as a way of saying good-bye. Siblings may choose to draw the baby a picture. These can be very private ways of saying good-bye, or they can be part of the memorial service for the baby. Many parents express a sense of peace of having some formal way of communicating their feelings to their baby. Another way a parent or family may honor their baby is by planting trees or flowers as a symbol of the love they had hoped to give.

"My husband and I planted a tree in our son's honor. I look at that tree and feel comfort in that a part of him will grow strong and sure as we had hoped that he would."

Keepsakes

Keepsakes and mementos are often hard to look at or accept at the time that your baby dies. Pictures are one type of keepsake that may be difficult to think about. Many parents often refuse pictures at the time that their baby dies only to regret it later. Your baby can be photographed with your consent and you can obtain the pictures at a later date. Your nurse will discuss this with you. Other keepsakes include a baby ID bracelet, footprints, a lock of baby's hair, the blanket or clothes that your baby wore when you held him or her. If the baby's clothes and blanket become soiled, you may be offered a new set instead. You can decide which set of clothes you wish to keep. You will be given a tiny gold ring as a memento of your baby. This ring can be worn on a chain or kept inside the box of keepsakes.

This information has been reviewed and recommended for use by the UAMS/CPED/Patient Education Advisory Committee.

Seeing your Baby

Seeing and holding your baby often provides comfort and peace as well as helps when saying good-bye. Take as much time as you need, and ask for a private room to spend time with your baby. It is not unusual to be afraid of seeing your baby. The nurse can describe your baby so that you know what to expect.

“Of all of the people that I have ever cared for that have chosen to see and or hold their babies, none of them have ever said that they regretted it. Of those that did not choose to see or hold their babies, many of them have said they will regret it forever.”

As you and your family prepare to say good-bye to your baby, remember that there are many things to think about and choose- but overall there are no wrong choices as long as you choose what is in your heart. This is your time to parent your baby that has died. Do whatever you need to do to express yourself to your baby. Above all else, cherish the memories that you create together with this baby. The pain will not disappear, but if you have said good-bye in a way that is right for you, you will find comfort in that.

Additional Information:

- www.journeyofhearts.org
- www.griefworks.com

Support Groups and Newsletters:

Bereaved Parent of the USA

Central Arkansas Chapter
Contact: (501) 944-9007
bpusathecentralarkansaschapter.org

The Recovery Room

Contact: 1-866-273-3835

Good Mourning Grief Support

Groups for Children and Parents
Contact: (501) 364-7000
www.goodmourningcenter.org

SHARE

Contact: (501) 202-1777 or
1-800-445-7760 (Statewide)
www.nationalshareoffice.com

Journey

Contact: (501) 552-6499

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