

Pregnancy after Loss

For grieving parents in a time filled with varying and complex emotions

A gentle congratulations on your pregnancy. Being pregnant is a bittersweet time for many parents who have had a prior pregnancy or baby loss, as their focus shifts from getting pregnant to staying pregnant. **Grieving parents often feel confusing emotions during this time.** While everyone's experience is different, here is some information that may help you on this journey.

You do not have to navigate this challenging experience alone.

We hope that you find ways to allow yourself to continue to feel the grief of your loss and feel the joy of a new pregnancy. These feelings can exist at the same time.

Try to be present in this experience and find ways to support yourself as different emotions arise.

What Can Be Helpful

- Accept that pregnancy after loss is hard.
- Give yourself compassion and grace throughout your journey.
- Allow yourself to celebrate or not celebrate this pregnancy.
- Take time to grieve your previous loss(es), even while pregnant.
- Know that no future baby replaces or makes up for the one(s) you have lost.
- Remember that it's okay to still think about and be sad about your prior loss(es).
- Realize that this is a different pregnancy, with a different baby, and a different outcome.
- Learn about mental, physical, and emotional struggles in pregnancy after loss.
- Understand how your previous loss affects your decisions in this pregnancy.
- Honor the complex and sometimes conflicting feelings that may come up.
- Take it one day, one moment, or even one breath at a time.
- Make time for self-care.
- Control what you can and accept that some things are out of your control.
- Find a strong support system that may include family, friends, other pregnant after loss parents, and mental health providers.
- Be clear and specific about the kind of help, support, and advice you want from others.
- Join a virtual Pregnancy After Loss support group to be with other parents living a similar reality.
- Speak up for yourself and your baby with your medical care team, friends, and family.
- Find a medical provider who will respect and listen to your needs. You know your body and baby best and have the right to be heard.
- Plan the birth experience you hope for.
- Decline invitations to celebrations or events that may trigger you or make you uncomfortable.
- Believe that you deserve this pregnancy and baby. Find ways to affirm this each day.

Mental Health During Pregnancy after Loss

Seeking support from a Pregnancy After Loss support group, mental health provider, or both is important. Many parents who are pregnant after loss struggle with their mental health in different ways.

Some of the issues parents experience during pregnancy after loss include:

- always feeling stressed, a reality of pregnancy after loss.
- living in a constant state of fear and worry.
- experiencing anxiety, depression, and PTSD, both during the pregnancy and after the birth—parents who are pregnant after loss have higher rates of these conditions.
- finding it hard to bond with the new baby during pregnancy and after birth can be an effect of parental mental health struggles.

Common Feelings in Pregnancy after Loss

- Disbelief
- Doubt
- Emptiness
- Excitement
- Fear
- Guilt
- Hope
- Joy
- Regret
- Relief



For more information, resources, and support, scan or visit [Janesroom.org](https://janesroom.org).

