

WHAT TO DO FOR YOURSELF AFTER THE LOSS OF A BABY

Suggestions from bereavement experts and support group leaders for parents facing pregnancy loss:

Be Human: Admit it when you feel lonely or in pain. Allow yourself to ask for help, and accept it when family and friends extend a hand. If necessary, contact a local support group for grieving parents.

Communicate: Talk about the baby and your feelings with your partner, family and friends.

Read: Refer to books, articles and poems that provide comfort, understanding and the sense you're not alone.

Write: Record your thoughts in a diary or journal. Write letters, notes or poems to or about the baby.

Physical Exam: Because your body also may respond to the grief, schedule a physical examination about four months after experiencing a loss.

Stay Stable: Wait about a year before making any major decisions regarding your job, moving and relationships. Don't let others make decisions for you.

Faith: Seek spiritual bonds, whether by renewing ties with clergy or setting aside quite time for reflection.

Nutrition: Eat a balanced diet that includes milk, protein, vegetables, fruit and whole grains. Avoid junk food.

Fluid Intake: Drink eight glasses of liquids (juice, water, soda) per day. Avoid caffeine or alcohol.

Exercise: Do something active every day. Even a walk around the block can be useful.

Rest: Avoid increased work activity. Maintain stable rest patterns, even if you're unable to sleep.

Adapted from, "The Silent Loss", Associated Press,

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