



PROJECT POPPYSEED

Breaking the Silence of Perinatal Loss

Perinatal Loss: Labor & Delivery Unit

A Quick Guide for Healthcare Professionals

Making Memories

Memories may be all that are left after a baby dies. Collecting mementoes helps create a meaningful connection with the baby and can facilitate healing. Parents may appreciate the following:

- Photographs
- Video
- Hand/foot prints
- Hair clippings
- Blankets
- Arm/ankle bands
- Bassinet card
- Cardiac tracings
- Ultrasound photos
- Recording heart tones

Parents may also appreciate the following suggestions:

- Baptism
- Birthday party
- Naming ceremony

“Those memories are all I have left, and those memories will keep me going forever.”

Communication

So often the fear of saying the wrong thing prevents us from saying anything. Here are some examples of helpful versus unhelpful statements:

Helpful

- “May I sit with you?”
- “Thank you for letting me be a part of your journey.”
- “I wish this didn’t happen.”
- “I’m here if you would like to talk.”

Unhelpful

- “At least you can try again.”
- “At least you didn’t get a chance to know your baby.”
- “These things happen.”
- “You’ll feel better soon.”

Communication with team members is also important. Placing a sign on the door alerts others to the loss.

Note: With permission, use the baby’s name whenever possible.

Bonding

Each person is unique. Research shows that parents who are able to bond with their baby are better equipped to heal in their grief. Below are some suggestions on how to facilitate bonding. Gently offer the following to parents while respecting their decisions:

Parents

- Holding baby
- Rooming in
- Skin to skin
- Bathing baby
- Dressing baby

Siblings

- Holding baby
- Photographs
- Drawing pictures
- Sitting with parents

Extended Family

- Holding baby
- Private space
- Unlimited visitors
- Extended visiting hours

Additional Considerations:

Privacy

Cluster care and decrease traffic flow to maximize parents’ time with their baby.

Cuddle Cot

Cuddle Cots allow parents to spend more time with their baby.

Room Location

Rooming parents at the end of the hall decreases exposure to babies crying.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

www.projectpoppyseed.org | projectpoppyseed@yahoo.com