

### Post mortem

Following delivery medical staff will discuss post mortem examination with you. A short film from Held in our hearts Charity may help you with the decision. You can find it using this QR code or following this short link.



<https://tinyurl.com/sandsPM>

Post mortem examinations are normally completed within 7-10 days. After this your funeral choice can proceed. However it can take up to 6 months for the post mortem report to be available.

### Further Information and Support

We appreciate that this is a lot of information to take in. If you wish to discuss any of this information further, please speak to your midwife / nurse or doctor. If you feel you need further support following your loss, the following organisations can help:

#### NHS Lothian Bereavement Service

Phone: 0131 242 6995

Email: [bereavement.service@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk](mailto:bereavement.service@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk)

#### Held in Our Hearts

Phone: 0131 622 6263

Website: [www.heldinourhearts.org.uk](http://www.heldinourhearts.org.uk)

#### Simba

Website: [www.simbacharity.org.uk](http://www.simbacharity.org.uk)

Phone: 0131 353 0055

#### Miscarriage Association

Helpline: 01924 200 799 (Monday to Friday from 9am to 4pm)

Edinburgh area local contact after 8.30pm 0131 4475038

Website: [www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk](http://www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

Email: [info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk](mailto:info@miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

Please ask a member of the department if you require this leaflet in a different language, larger print, Braille (English only) or audio tape.

## Arrangements following the loss of your pregnancy



**12 - 24 weeks**

## Arrangements following the loss of your pregnancy

Please accept our sympathies at this difficult time. This leaflet gives you information on the choices available to you after the loss of your baby. You may have a lot of questions and we realise how hard it may be to make decisions. If you would like to discuss any of the information in this leaflet in more detail, please speak to your midwife / nurse or doctor.

### Your choices at this time

You can choose to make your own arrangements for individual burial or cremation of your baby, or you can authorise the hospital to organise shared cremation. Whatever you choose, please be assured that your baby's remains will be treated with dignity and respect at all times.

### Making your own arrangements

Some parents and families wish to have an individual burial or cremation for their baby. You can ask a funeral director to help organise the burial or cremation at a cemetery or crematorium of your choice. You do not have to have a funeral ceremony, but some parents find this comforting. Family members and friends can attend if you wish. Funerals for children in Scotland are free, but there may be charges for additional items, which your funeral director can advise you on.

If you arrange an individual cremation, you will also have a choice about what happens to your baby's ashes. The ashes are all that is left in the cremator at the end of the cremation process, once any metal has been removed. Crematorium staff will make every effort to ensure that ashes are gathered following cremation, however national guidance on infant cremation advises that recovery of ashes cannot be absolutely guaranteed. On the very rare occasion ashes are not recovered, the crematorium must notify the family within 48 hours.

You can also arrange a burial, and some cemeteries have special areas set aside for babies.

## Hospital arranged shared cremation

Some parents prefer to ask the hospital to make arrangements. For a pregnancy loss before 24 weeks we offer shared cremation. Shared cremation means your baby's remains are placed in an individual casket that is then held in a larger casket together with other pregnancy losses. The shared casket is transported by our funeral director to Mortonhall Crematorium, where it's received at the Courtyard Entrance. It is not possible for you to attend the shared cremation or for any individual ashes to be returned to you. The shared ashes which are gathered following cremation are buried in the new Baby Garden of Remembrance at Mortonhall Crematorium which you are welcome to visit.

### When do I need to make a decision?

You may already know what you wish to choose or you might need a bit longer. Once you've reached a decision, we will ask you to sign a form to confirm your wishes. You do not need to make a decision before you leave the hospital. You can discuss these choices further with a member of your care team after you have returned home. If you would like to do this, please phone the Bereavement Service on 0131 242 6995 to let us know your wishes.

When you leave the hospital, we will ask you if you would like us to contact you again in 6 weeks if we haven't heard from you. If you opt not to be contacted, and we haven't heard from you in that time, we will arrange a hospital shared cremation. So it's really important that you let us know within 6 weeks if you would like to make alternative arrangements.

### What if I change my mind? Who do I contact?

You can change your mind about the decision you've made about cremation or burial in the first week after your loss. To let us know you wish to change a decision please phone the Bereavement Service on 0131 242 6995.

### Record keeping

We will provide you with a copy of the form confirming your decision. NHS Lothian will also keep a record of this. Records of burials and cremations are kept at the appropriate cemetery or crematorium.