

Arrangements following the loss of your pregnancy

Early loss

The hospital may offer to examine the placental tissue to exclude molar pregnancy, a rare complication of pregnancy. If you do not wish us to do this examination, please let your midwife/nurse know.

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 nurse / midwife or doctor. If you feel you need further support following your loss, the following organisations may be able to help:

NHS Lothian Bereavement Service

Phone: 0131 242 6995

Email: bereavement.service@nhslothian.scot.nhs.uk

Sands Lothians

Phone: 0131 622 6263

Website: www.sands-lothians.org.uk

Simba

Phone: 01368 860 141

Website: www.simbacharity.org.uk

Miscarriage Association

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

Website: www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk

Email: 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.

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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 for you to make decisions. If you would like to discuss in more detail any of the information in this leaflet, please speak to your nurse / midwife or doctor.

Your choices at this time

You can choose to make your own arrangements for burial or cremation of your baby, or you can authorise the hospital to make arrangements on your behalf. 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 take on the role of arranging the burial or cremation of their baby themselves. You can ask a funeral director to help you organise an individual burial or cremation service at a cemetery or crematorium of your choice. Family members and friends are also able to attend if you wish. There may be a cost for an individual funeral, depending on the arrangements and type of service you request. A funeral director can advise you about the options and any costs involved.

If you choose to arrange an individual cremation, the crematorium will make every effort to ensure that ashes can be gathered following the cremation. Ashes are all that is left in the cremator at the end of the cremation process, once any metal has been removed. On rare occasions it may not be possible to recover ashes from individual cremations of babies. Where ashes are recovered, you will be able to decide what happens to them. A national Code of Practice guides all services in cremations.

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 their baby. For the loss of a baby before 24 weeks, our local practice is to arrange shared cremation. This service is provided at no cost to you. A shared cremation means your baby's remains will be placed into their own individual container and then within a larger casket which is shared with other pregnancy losses. Your baby's remains will be transported and cremated within the larger casket. After this kind of cremation, it is not possible to return any individual ashes to you. Any shared ashes will be interred in the Garden of Remembrance at Mortonhall Crematorium in Edinburgh.

When do I need to make these decisions?

You may know straight away what you wish to choose, or you may find the decision difficult. You do not need to make all of these decisions 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 telephone

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Once you have reached a decision, we will ask you to sign a form to record your wishes. If you have not let us know a decision after six weeks, the national guidelines say we should arrange shared cremation. We will not contact you about this, so it is important that you let us know within six weeks if you would like to make alternative arrangements.

Please telephone..... on the number above.

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

You can change your mind about any decision you have made about cremation or burial in the first week after your loss. To let us know you wish to change a decision please telephone

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Record keeping

We will provide you with a copy of the form recording the decision you have made about what you wish to happen to your baby's remains. NHS Lothian will also keep a record of this. Records of burials and cremations are kept at the appropriate cemetery or crematorium.