

# WHEN ONE OR MORE BABIES DIE

## What may help during pregnancy?

## You may want to...

Name the babies.

Keep a journal, scrapbook, baby book or memory box to gather mementos.



If your baby has been dead for a while before the birth or has a serious abnormality, talk to your doctor and midwives about what your baby might look like. Parents rarely regret seeing their babies in this condition, although they may feel sad later that they cannot share the photo with others for fear of unsettling them. The hospital staff can help support you in saying goodbye, including wrapping the baby sensitively.

Keep talking - your partner, family and friends can be of enormous support.

Write your birth plan - you may wish to ask for a quiet environment for the birth, with as few staff as possible. After the birth, you might prefer a private room and to put up a 'No Visitors' sign.



Plan in advance which relatives and friends you would like to meet the twin(s) who have died. This helps to make the baby a real person to other loved ones. Even young children appreciate knowing that they got to meet their baby brother or sister and say goodbye.

Contact Tamba's Bereavement Support Group if you would like to speak to someone who has been through a similar experience.



Think about whether you would like to remember the birth. Many parents whose baby/babies died are grateful that they do remember the birth or regret being too drugged to remember. If you would prefer not to have general anaesthesia or drugs that fog your mind, mention this in your birth plan.

Start thinking about burial / cremation arrangements and what kind of ceremony you would like.

If you have a surviving baby ►

# If you have a surviving baby, you may also like to...

Talk to, sing to and stroke the surviving twin.

You are entitled to grieve for your loss - don't allow your doctor or midwives to ignore the baby who has died, or your emotions, or tell you to "just focus on the healthy baby".

Talk with your doctor if you're worried about a surviving baby's health.

If you would like to keep visual memories of your babies, ask for a picture (of both / all babies) whenever you have an ultrasound. You may also want to take photos of you pregnant too.

If people ask what presents to get your surviving baby, consider also asking for something to remember the sick baby or baby who has died, such as charitable donations.

If your surviving baby is likely to require neonatal care, look around the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), meet the staff and try to ask any questions, so that it will not be totally unfamiliar if one or both/all babies are there.

This fact sheet is an extract from our updated 2017 Tamba Bereavement Support Group Booklet. If you would like to see the whole booklet you can download it here: [www.tamba.org.uk/bereavement](http://www.tamba.org.uk/bereavement) or you can email [support-team@tamba.org.uk](mailto:support-team@tamba.org.uk)

Tamba's Bereavement Support Group (BSG) was established in 1982 in response to requests from parents who had lost a twin. All BSG befrienders are volunteers who have suffered a loss from a multiple birth either during pregnancy, at birth or at any stage after birth.

None of the befrienders are 'professionals'. They offer a befriending NOT a counselling service.

Contact with another parent who has gone through a similar experience can be a source of great help in learning to live with the loss. This peer support can help in overcoming the enormous sense of isolation parents can feel. Tamba have an on-line facility to provide virtual peer to peer support. Details of this caring supportive community can be found by contacting [support-team@tamba.org.uk](mailto:support-team@tamba.org.uk)

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