# Supporting Someone Through Pregnancy After Loss

## A guide for partners, family, and trusted support people

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Someone can be deeply grateful for a new pregnancy and still feel afraid. They can feel hopeful and guarded. They can love this baby while continuing to grieve the baby they lost.
You don't need to take those feelings away.

**Your job isn't to make everything feel okay.**
**It's to help them feel less alone in whatever they're feeling.**

## Let this Pregnancy Be Its Own Experience

It can be tempting to treat a new pregnancy as the happy ending after a loss.

But a new pregnancy does not replace the pregnancy or baby that came before it.

Try to make room for both.

**Instead of:**
"See? Everything worked out."

**Try:**
"I know how much this pregnancy means to you, and I know it doesn't erase what you've been through."

**Remember:** Joy about this pregnancy and grief about a previous loss can exist at the same time.

## Be Careful with Reassurance

After pregnancy loss, someone has already experienced a time when things did not turn out the way they hoped.

That can make statements like these difficult to hear:

- "Everything is going to be fine."
- "Try not to worry."
- "Just stay positive."
- "This pregnancy is different."
- "You need to enjoy this."

Even when meant lovingly, reassurance can make someone feel like they need to hide their fear.

**Try instead:**

- "It makes sense that this feels scary."
- "You don't have to feel positive all the time."
- "I'm here, whatever today feels like."
- "Do you want to talk about it, or would a distraction feel better?"
- "What would feel supportive right now?"

You don't have to convince them that everything will be okay to help them feel supported.

## Understand that Milestones May Feel Different

Appointments, ultrasounds, test results, pregnancy announcements, and approaching a previous loss milestone can carry complicated emotions.

A day that seems exciting to you may feel very different to them.

They may:

- feel anxious before appointments
- have difficulty trusting reassuring news
- feel especially vulnerable around certain dates or milestones
- hesitate to make plans, buy baby items, or announce the pregnancy
- feel relief after an appointment and worried again soon afterward

**Follow their lead.**

Instead of assuming how they feel, ask:
**"How are you feeling about this appointment?"**

Sometimes that question is more helpful than, "Aren't you excited?"

## Don't Rush Their Excitement

You may be excited—and they may be, too.

But they may also be cautious about:

- announcing the pregnancy
- talking about names

- planning a baby shower
- preparing a nursery
- buying baby items
- discussing the future

Try not to interpret caution as a lack of love or connection.

**Let them decide when and how they want to celebrate, prepare, and share.**

There is no deadline for feeling excited.

## Remember the Baby Who Came Before

A new pregnancy does not mean the previous loss has been forgotten.

If the baby had a name and the parent uses it, you can use it too.

Remembering significant dates, acknowledging anniversaries, or simply making space for them to talk about their loss can communicate something important:
**Their grief still has a place here.**

You do not have to avoid mentioning the baby because you are afraid of reminding them.
They already remember.

## Offer Practical Support

Support doesn't always need to be a conversation.

You might:

- check in before or after an appointment
- offer to attend an appointment if they want company
- bring a meal or help with everyday tasks during a difficult week
- remember dates or milestones that may feel especially significant
- ask before sharing pregnancy or baby-related news
- respect decisions about when the pregnancy is shared with others
- offer company without expecting them to talk about the pregnancy

Try:
**"I'd like to help. Would company, practical help, distraction, or some space feel best today?"**

## Follow Their Lead

There isn't one "right" way to experience pregnancy after loss.

- Some people want to talk about their pregnancy often. Others don't.
- Some celebrate every milestone. Others move through pregnancy one appointment—or one day—at a time.
- Some want reassurance. Others find reassurance frustrating.
- Some feel connected to the pregnancy immediately. Others may protect themselves emotionally for a while.
- Ask instead of assuming.

And remember that what feels supportive today may be different tomorrow.

## You Don't Need the Perfect Words

Supporting someone through pregnancy after loss isn't about saying exactly the right thing.

Listen.
Believe them when they tell you what they need.
Make room for fear without trying to fix it.
Celebrate when they want to celebrate.
Remember what came before.
And keep showing up.

**You don't have to take away the uncertainty to help someone feel less alone in it.**

## When More Support May Help

Pregnancy after loss can be emotionally difficult, and previous pregnancy loss is associated with increased risk for anxiety during a subsequent pregnancy.

If worry, grief, or distress is becoming difficult to manage, support is available. A medical provider, therapist specializing in perinatal mental health, pregnancy-after-loss support group, or other trusted professional can be part of the support system.