


Discharge Teaching for Patients Experiencing an Early Pregnancy Loss

PATIENT INSTRUCTION HANDOUT

PHYSICAL WELL-BEING	
<p style="text-align: center;">When to Seek IMMEDIATE Medical Care</p>	<p>Consult your healthcare provider or go to the nearest emergency department immediately if you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suddenly have severe pain in your abdomen that is not controlled by pain medication ● Suddenly feel faint or feel like passing out ● Have very heavy bleeding (<i>soaking more than 3 sanitary pads in 3 hours</i>) ● Have chills or a fever greater than 38°C ● Have foul smelling vaginal discharge
<p style="text-align: center;">Vaginal Bleeding</p> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You may have vaginal bleeding, similar to a heavy menstrual period. This should slow down over the next 7 days. Many experience some bleeding or spotting for up to 3 weeks. ● While bleeding, you should only use sanitary pads (not tampons), and you should also avoid having a bath (showers are acceptable), douching, swimming, or having sexual intercourse. ● If you miscarry at home, you may choose to collect the baby or pregnancy tissues, or not. How you manage the remains is a personal choice. For more information, contact your healthcare provider or see pages 12-13 of the PAIL Network “Miscarriage: Pregnancy Loss Before 20 Weeks” Booklet (<i>scan QR code to the left for the Resource Library.</i>)
<p style="text-align: center;">Menstruation / Family Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You can expect a normal menstrual period 4 to 8 weeks after a pregnancy loss. Talk to your healthcare provider if this does not occur. ● It is possible to become pregnant immediately after a pregnancy loss, even before your menstrual period has returned. Discuss your plans for family planning with your healthcare provider.

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PHYSICAL WELL-BEING, *continued*

Breast Care



- After a pregnancy loss, your breasts may or may not produce milk
- **If you experience breast discomfort:**
 - Wear a well-fitting bra with good support
 - Apply cold compresses for comfort
 - Take warm showers to help the milk drip out
 - If your breasts feel very full, you may hand express a small amount of milk from your breasts. Expressing a spoonful or two will not increase your milk production, and may help you be more comfortable.
 - Fullness should decrease over the next 3 to 4 days

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Getting Support

- Family and friends want to do the right thing but often are unsure of how to help or what to say. Let them know how you feel and what you need at this time.
- If you feel you need someone to talk to, there are skilled people in your community. Discuss a referral with your healthcare provider. A sheet of contacts and resources is also included for your support.
- A hospital social worker or spiritual care provider may also be available to help upon your request

NOTES:

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PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING, *continued*

Grieving and Remembering Your Baby

- It is important to allow yourself to grieve the loss of this pregnancy
- There is no right way to feel after a pregnancy loss
- The experience of grief is powerful and you may feel physically and emotionally drained
- Remember that by grieving you are helping yourself heal
- You may find that planning for the future is difficult during this time
- Some parents have found the following things helpful to provide comfort and begin healing:
 - *Take care of yourself*
 - *Take time to be with your partner*
 - *Take time to cry and to grieve*
 - *Take a break from your regular schedule*
 - *Make a memento box or scrap box to commemorate your baby and the pregnancy experience*
 - *Write a poem or letter to your baby or about your baby*
 - *Keep a diary about your experience*
 - *Name your baby*
 - *Have a ceremony to recognize your baby*
 - *Light a candle*
 - *Plant a tree or make a memorial garden*
 - *Talk to family, friends, religious leaders, or healthcare providers*
 - *Talk to families that have had a similar experience*
 - *Attend a bereavement support group, such as through PAIL Network*

**Adapted from: Provincial Council
for Maternal and Child Health. (2017)**

Early Pregnancy Loss in the Emergency Department –
Recommendations for the Provision of Compassionate Care.
Toronto, ON, Canada.



**PAIL booklet
MISCARRIAGE link**

www.pailnetwork.ca



Pregnancy ED link

www.pregnancyed.com



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