

“Healing doesn’t mean forgetting
or making the memories insignificant.
Healing means refocusing.”

Unknown

Emotions After a Miscarriage

There are three steps in the grief process:

1. Shock/Denial
2. Anger/Guilt/Depression
3. Acceptance

Following a miscarriage, you may notice that you feel like your emotions are up and down, like on a roller coaster ride. You may feel numbness, anger, guilt, sadness, or depression. The emotional distress can even lead to physical symptoms such as trouble sleeping, loss of appetite, and difficulty concentrating, along with crying.

Each person will experience grief differently and for different lengths of time. Having feelings of sadness even months after your loss can be normal; however, minimal grief can be normal too.

Coping

After your miscarriage you may have a hard time adjusting to the many emotional challenges. Some suggestions you could try include:

- Keep a journal of your thoughts or feelings.
- Talk with others that have had a similar experience.
- Eat a well balanced diet, as you consume more energy when you grieve.
- Exercise
- Get enough rest.
- Avoid making major decisions until you can give it your full attention.
- If your grief interferes with your daily living, contact your medical provider.

Resolve Through Sharing

RAMC offers this program to help you through this difficult time. For more resources or to ask questions please call Sarah Celeste, RN or Amy Romberg, RN, at 768-6251.

Websites

- Dougy.org — National Center for Grieving Children and Families
- FaithsLodge.org — A special lodge in Northern WI offering families a retreat for grieving
- Griefnet.org — On-line support groups for kids and adults
- Griefwatch.com — Bereavement resources, memorial products and links
- PLIDA.org — Pregnancy Loss and Infant Death Alliance
- StarLegacyFoundation.org/support-groups — Bereaved parents support groups
- SweetPeaProject.org—Comfort, support and guidance to families who have experienced the death of a baby

“ Your absence has gone through me
like thread through a needle.
Everything I do is stitched with its color.”

W.S. Merwin



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To make an appointment with an RAMC family practice
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Physicians Group at (608) 524-8611

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Experiencing a Miscarriage

“You never arrived in my arms,
but you will never leave my heart.”

Zoe Clark-Coates



Reedsburg
AREA MEDICAL CENTER

Symptoms of a Miscarriage

A miscarriage doesn't happen all at once. It usually happens over several days, and symptoms may vary. The following are symptoms that you may notice and feel:

- Severe cramping
- Abdominal pain
- Bleeding that changes from light to heavy
- Back pain
- Fever
- Weakness

Causes of a Miscarriage

According to the March of Dimes, as many as 50% of all pregnancies end in miscarriage, most often before a woman misses a menstrual period or even knows she is pregnant. About 15% of recognized pregnancies will end in a miscarriage.

When recognized miscarriages are investigated, approximately 50-60% are found to be caused by chromosome abnormalities. There is nothing that either parent did to cause the abnormality and nothing that you can do to prevent it.

The following reasons have been identified as potential causes of a miscarriage, but often, a cause is not identified:

- Infections
- Genetic factors
- Hormonal irregularities
- Uterine factors (incompetent cervix)
- Severe kidney disease
- Immune system disorders (Lupus)
- Diabetes that is not controlled
- Congenital heart disease
- Exposure to environmental and workplace hazards
- Improper implantation of fertilized egg in the uterine lining
- Maternal age
- Obesity

What to Expect

Every miscarriage is different. Some people experience mild cramping and some severe cramping or pain. The bleeding may be heavy at times and contain clots and/or tissue. The white "hat" in your comfort kit is for you to place under the seat of the toilet so that you can collect any fetal tissue that you pass. You can use the gloves in your comfort kit to gather the tissue and place it in the container with the lid.

Some people prefer to bury the tissue. If you do not have a location that you feel appropriate to privately bury the fetal tissue, RAMC, along with Farber Funeral Home and Grasse Funeral home, typically have a biannual memorial service during which you can have the remains buried. If this is your wish, you can bring your fetal remains to the Birth Center (we will deliver them to Farber Funeral Home or Grasse Funeral Home), or you can take them directly to either funeral home, where they will be held until the service.

- To arrange a time with Farber Funeral Home call (608) 524-2339.
- To arrange with Grasse Funeral and Cremation call (608) 524-2337.
- You can contact the RAMC Birth Center any time at 1-608-768-6251.

However, if this does not interest you, you can decide on your own what to do with the remains. If your provider gave you other instructions, please follow their recommendation.

Treatment Options

With some miscarriages, your provider might offer different treatment choices.

- Cytotec (Misoprostol) — This is a medication that is given to you to simulate contractions.
- Dilation and curettage (D & C) — A D&C is used to remove tissue that remains in the uterus. Local anesthesia is used, the cervix is dilated, and the contents are gently removed.
- Natural — If your bleeding is not too heavy and you don't have any signs of infection, you may also just be able to wait and allow your body to go into labor on its own.

“Grief, I’ve learned, is really just love.
It’s all the love you want to give, but cannot.
All that unspent love gathers up
in the corners of your eyes, the lump in your throat,
and in that hollow part of your chest.
Grief is just love with no place to go.”

Jamie Anderson



Managing your Discomfort

Your doctor may recommend pain medications to manage your discomfort. In addition to the use of medication, you may find the following helpful:

- Warm packs or heating pads
- Tub baths or warm showers

Bleeding: How Much is Normal?

It is normal for bleeding to continue for several days, but it should not be heavy for more than just a few days. The bleeding you experience can be heavy and even contain large clots. **If you are soaking through a full size vaginal pad (not a panty liner) in under an hour, you should seek medical care at once.** If your bleeding is heavier than an average menstrual period for more than two or three days, you are dizzy, feel faint, or have sharp pains in your abdomen, you should see your provider to be assessed for any possible complications.

Signs of an Infection

A small percentage of women (about 3%) will develop an infection following a miscarriage. An infection can be caused from tissue that has remained in the uterus. Uterine infections need to be treated; see your provider immediately if you have any of the following symptoms:

- Fever over 100.4 degrees F
- Chills
- Bleeding and cramping lasting longer than 2 weeks
- Foul smelling vaginal discharge

You can reduce your risk of infection by avoiding tampons, sexual intercourse, and douching for the amount of time recommended by your doctor.