

Children

Remember that children have their own fears about death. An older brother or sister may be silently worrying about the new baby.

Let your other children share in the fun of caring for the new baby. They still need their own share of love and must feel that they are important members of the family.

It is helpful for children to talk about their feelings. This can give you and the children a better understanding of their fears. Although this may be painful for parents, talking is the best way to reassure other children.

Feelings Of Over-Protectiveness Towards Other Children

After the sudden, unexpected death of your baby, it is normal for you to worry about your older children and your new baby. When the worst has happened to you—you worry!

Often these feelings can be relieved by the joy and happiness you feel just being with your children.

Grandparents' Feelings

You know how the death of your baby affected your parents. They may now feel very worried about the health of the new grandchild. They may need reassurance that all is well. You can help by telling them of the new baby's progress and keeping in close touch. Grandparents may want to contact the Canadian Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths for support.

Your feelings and thoughts are real. Your fear, your joy, your uncertainty have been felt by other parents.

We have learned that life is precious. The birth of a baby is a time of great joy. It is the beginning of a new life. We hope this will help you enjoy your new baby.

Facts You Should Know About Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome

- Is the third leading cause of death for infants between one month and one year of age
- Cannot be predicted or prevented at this time
- Is not caused by neglect or child abuse
- Is not caused by vaccinations or toxic gases
- Is not contagious or infectious
- Is not considered hereditary
- Is not a new medical problem
- Occurs rapidly and silently, usually during periods of sleep
- Probably has more than one cause (although the final death mechanisms appear to be similar)

Having Another Child after a SIDS Death



After the unexpected death of your baby to Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, there are endless questions in your mind as you think about another pregnancy and birth.

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Canadian Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths

Bringing Hope & Life to Canadian Families



This section is for parents and families of babies who have died from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). It has been prepared by parents who have survived the nightmare of a SIDS death.

Are We Ready for Another Child?

Whether you become pregnant soon after, years later or never again, the decision is yours and yours alone.

You may feel that you are waiting for someone to tell you it is time for another baby. Only you can tell when the time is right.

It is important to remember that every baby is special. A new baby will not replace your baby who has died.

You may find it reassuring to talk about your worries with your doctor or pre-natal instructor. It often helps to talk with another parent who has had a baby after a Sudden Infant Death.

For many Sudden Infant Death parents, the birth or the next baby is very close to the first anniversary of their baby's death. This can cause a mix of emotions—celebration and sorrow—that can be confusing for all family members. This confusion is normal.

Can Another Baby Die Too?

No one can promise you that your future babies will not die. We can say that it is very, very rare for Sudden Infant Death to happen more than once in a family.

You may worry and fret over your new baby's health. You may wonder how you will survive bringing up a new baby. But you will survive.

You may wonder whether or not to use a home apnea monitor. These monitors do not prevent Sudden Infant Death. Discuss the use of monitors with your doctor.

You may feel guilty or even angry when you learn new information about reducing the risks for Sudden Infant Death.

There is no reason for self-blame. While you may wish to put your new baby to sleep on the back, to keep the baby warm, but not hot; to breastfeed if possible and not to smoke, we know that following this advice will not end all Sudden Infant Deaths. The causes of Sudden Infant Death are still unknown.

Remember:

Risk factors are not causes
Sudden Infant Death is unpredictable
Sudden Infant Death is not your fault
Contact the Canadian Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths if you would like more information.

Will I Be Afraid to Have Another Baby?

Yes, you may be. The fear of loving and losing another child is something that haunts us. But loving another child does not diminish your feeling for the baby who died.

"I didn't love Paul any less when Josh came along.
Just like I won't love Josh any less when he has a
new baby brother or sister" (SIDS Mother)

It is normal to feel as if you are betraying your baby if and when you become pregnant. You may feel guilty that you are leaving him or her behind.

You cannot replace a human being. You will never forget your baby. Memories last forever.

How Will I Feel When I Become Pregnant?

You may feel overjoyed or you may be terrified at the thought of being pregnant.

"Will I ever sleep?"
"Will I panic?"
"Will the baby be all right?"

Take it one day at a time; one moment at a time. Every day your confidence will grow and you will feel better.

The Birth of Your Baby

Your next birth will be an overwhelming experience. Memories pour back; you may even confuse the two births. It is natural to compare birth experiences and babies. This new baby will be special and will bring his or her own joy.

You will love them both.

The First Days At Home

During the first days at home and when this baby reaches the same age as your baby who died, you may panic.

"I was afraid when he came home. Once when I went to check on him, I froze, I had to wake up my husband to go in first."

These feelings are normal. Many parents feel panic. It often helps to talk about these fears with another parent or understanding friend.

Being A Super-Parent

You may want to be the perfect parent. You are grateful that the baby is alive, you feel you should never be cross or tired or fed-up. Relax if you have some of these feelings. You are human! It is very stressful to cope with a new baby.

Just try to be normal and have fun with your new little one. As your confidence grows, your worries will fade.

You Will Be Sensitive To Criticism

Some people may feel you are being overprotective or too wrapped up in this new baby. Others might think you are not being attentive enough. Try to do what feels right for you and your family.

For example, if it makes you comfortable to have your baby sleep in your room with you—do so. But if you find it more relaxing for the baby to sleep in another room, that is fine too.

You are the expert here.