



## Pregnancy After Loss

For women who have suffered one or multiple miscarriages, the thought of being pregnant again, while it's of course what we yearn for more than anything, can also feel like you're putting your heart and emotional wellbeing on the line. Deliberately choosing to throw yourself back in to that place of uncertainty, of waiting, of wondering if this time, you'll get the baby you so desperately want.

It's not easy though. Some days you may feel completely paralysed with fear. You may want to hide yourself away from the world until you know what the outcome is going to be. You may stop doing your normal activities for fear that anything you do might cause another miscarriage. You may consciously or unconsciously try to distance yourself from the life growing inside you, not wanting to get too attached – while simultaneously feeling guilty for it. Those hormones that hit you in a normal pregnancy, are very much exacerbated in a pregnancy after loss. Unfortunately, there really is no way of fast forwarding to the end of the first trimester, you have to make it through every day, every week. With this in mind, we have put together some coping techniques that you may find helpful.

### Supportive Family and Friends

There are different schools of thought on announcing a pregnancy before the 'safe' 12-week mark. Many believe that you must wait until you know everything is ok before announcing a pregnancy 'just in case something happens'. Others say that something happening is the very reason you should tell people – so that you have support. And once you've experienced a miscarriage, you know all too well that 'something' can and does happen.

When previously pregnant you may have told anyone and everyone you were pregnant – after all, it's exciting! Losing that pregnancy and then having to tell all those people may have left you wishing you'd waited. Likewise, you may have felt relieved that you didn't have to hide what you were going through.

No matter what your personal belief or experience has been, we believe that it's important not to travel this road on your own. Of course we have our husbands/partners, but letting one, two or a handful of trusted close friends or family in, can really help share the support load, particularly if your other half isn't great with erratic pregnancy anxieties and emotions.

Whatever you choose to do, having the right people around you is vital, especially if the worst does unfortunately happen again.

### **Join a Support Network of Women in the Same Place as You**

Being able to talk to people who are going through the same experiences and sharing the same feelings as you can make all the difference in getting through those early weeks and months of pregnancy following a miscarriage. Much like miscarriage itself, the anxieties and emotions during this time can only truly be understood by people who are going through or have gone through it themselves.

Pink Elephants has a private Facebook support group which you are welcome to join. No question is too silly, no feeling too 'out there', so please feel free to ask about anything that is troubling you and also share anything that has helped you.

### **Choose a Supportive Care Team**

Having a supportive care team, whether it's a GP, a team of midwives or a private obstetrician is crucially important when you are pregnant after miscarriage/s. And the more losses you have had, the more care and extra support you will need.

Your anxieties are going to be really heightened with this pregnancy. A few spots of blood will send you into panic. If you wake up one day without symptoms, you will panic. For maybe no reason at all, you will panic. At any of these times, you need to know that you can call your midwife, obstetrician or GP and they will be 100% supportive and understanding of your feelings.

You will likely want more regular appointments and ultrasounds up until 12 weeks, so that you can be reassured that everything is ok....or if it's not, so that you don't suffer the shock of a missed miscarriage. Again, you need a doctor or midwife who will not brush you off, but instead will be kind and gentle with your emotions.

At the end of the day, this is your pregnancy and these are your anxieties and whatever it takes to ease them and get you through, should be supported by your health care professional.

## Meditation and Mantra

If you find your anxieties are getting the better of you, meditation can be a useful tool to help calm you down.

For Sam on our team, it was her daily mantra of Fearless Receptivity that got her through those early terrifying days.

*Breathe in: 'Welcome everything'  
Breathe out: 'Push away nothing'.*

Simply taking the time to breathe and sit in stillness repeating this until she felt a sense of calm wash over her, made all the difference between coping and not.

## Shared Stories

Some women find reading success stories inspires them and gives them hope that they too will have a successful, healthy pregnancy. As well as this, reading other people's stories can give you ideas about treatment options, alternative therapies or different coping strategies that have worked for them.