

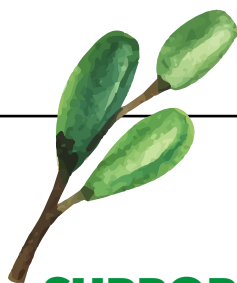
# *a friend in need*

a guide on how to help a friend who has recently miscarried

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THE  
pink  
elephants  
SUPPORT NETWORK





## **SUPPORT THROUGH LOSS & GRIEF**

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This resource has been designed to help you support your friend through the feelings of loss and grief she will be experiencing during this incredibly challenging time.

When a friend loses a baby through miscarriage it can be hard to know what to say or do. Perhaps you didn't know she was pregnant; or you may have been the first person she called. Either way, this is a heartbreaking time for her and she will need your support in the coming days and weeks.

If you have experienced a miscarriage yourself, you are more likely to have an understanding as to what she needs, but even so, everyone's individual experiences, feelings and coping mechanisms are unique. We hope to guide you through the ways you can best support your friend during this difficult time.

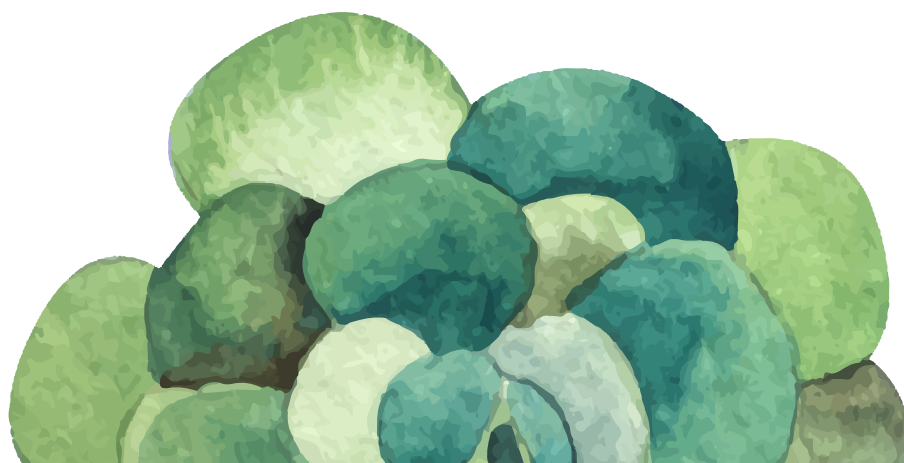
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## **FIRST THINGS FIRST**

Miscarriage and pregnancy loss can be a challenging time for the strongest of women. A myriad of emotions all associated with grief and loss will be impacting your friend, not to mention the dramatic drop in pregnancy hormones.

We all react to grief in different ways. She may cry, she may get angry, she may not want to talk about it, all of these are perfectly normal ways to deal with loss. Remember this may be your friend's first real experience of loss and she's probably terrified of how she's feeling right now.

The biggest thing you can do is be there for your friend, hold her hand and acknowledge her loss. A simple text - 'I'm really sorry for your loss' - is a great way to start but human contact is vital so don't shy away! A hug from a close friend is a massive show of support.



## HOW ARE THEY FEELING?



Sad and tearful

Shocked and confused

Numb

Jealous

Guilty

Empty and lonely

Angry and short tempered

Panicky / out of control

Disinterested in normal activities

Resentful

Scared about impending loss

Unable to cope with everyday life

## WHAT CAN I DO?

Make her a cup of tea and sit with her. Hold her hand, offer her a hug and listen... just listen.

She may not want to talk and if that's the case, just sit with her in silence. She will appreciate having you there, even if she can't express it.

Help her in practical ways - cook a meal or two, take care of the groceries, give her a break from her other kids or do pick ups/drop offs a couple of days.

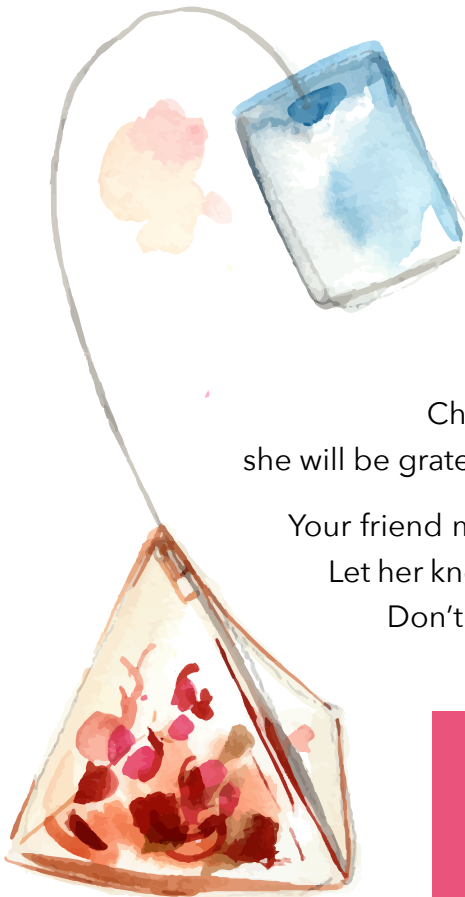
Check in every few days to see how she is going. She may not reply, but she will be grateful that you are thinking of her.

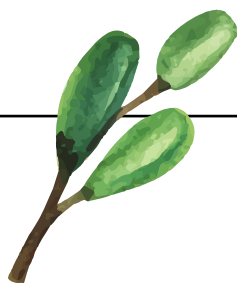
Your friend may want to withdraw and hide away from the world. This is normal.

Let her know you are there for her when she is ready and check in on her often.

Don't give up if she doesn't reply.

If you are worried about her state of mind, speak to her partner or encourage her to seek professional advice.





## AVOIDANCES - THINGS NOT TO SAY

Here's a helpful list of a few things you could try and avoid saying

- At least you know you can get pregnant
- You have xxx already
- It wasn't meant to be
- Better it happened now than later
- There was obviously something wrong with it
- You can always have another one
- It must be God's will
- It wasn't a real baby yet
- You wouldn't want a disabled child
- Lots of people have miscarriages

### Try these instead

- I'm sorry for your loss
- I know how much this meant to you, you must really be hurting right now
- I'm so sorry this happened
- I'm here for you



There are not many support networks that focus solely on early miscarriage and pregnancy loss which is why we founded The Pink Elephants Support Network. We have a list of both holistic and medical practitioners such as grief counsellors and specialist doctors on our website that your friend may be interested in consulting with in the future.

Our research has found that the overwhelming majority of women want their loss to be validated and their story heard. This is why we have a place on our website for women to share their personal stories. Your friend may find it helpful to share her story there too.

### Remember

The most important thing you can do for your friend is be there for her and acknowledge her loss. Your validation of the hurt and grief she is feeling will mean the world to her. Thank you for being such a caring friend.

Find more resources online at [pinkelephants.org.au](https://pinkelephants.org.au)