



Information For Parents Following The Death Of Your Baby



**THE
ROTUNDA
HOSPITAL**
DUBLIN

We are so sorry you have just received the devastating news that your baby has died, and we wish to extend our sincere sympathy to you following this very sad and upsetting news.

What happens now?

The choice about what happens next will depend on a number of factors. This includes if there are any medical reasons which mean you may need to be admitted to the hospital immediately, or if we need to begin labour (induction), or if it is safe to wait and you can go home for a time. In most cases, we hope you can deliver your baby vaginally and avoid a caesarean section where possible. Although initially you may find the thought of a vaginal delivery distressing, you will be able to go home sooner after delivery, there are fewer risks to you when compared to caesarean section, and your physical recovery is likely to be quicker and less complicated. The doctor can discuss this further with you if you wish.

Why did this happen?

Every parent wants to know the answer to the question 'why did my baby die?'. It is not always possible to answer to this, but a cause can be found in at least half of cases. There are a number of potential complications that may have contributed to your baby's death, including placental causes that can lead to poor fetal growth, pre-eclampsia, or bleeding from the placenta (abruption). Umbilical cord accidents, infection, diabetes, and abnormal development of the baby are also potential causes. You will be offered tests to try and find out why your baby has died, such that all possible causes of death are investigated. We will discuss all options for this and obtain your consent prior to proceeding with any investigations. Some of these tests can take some time, but should not impact significantly on the arrangements you wish you make for your baby. Depending on the circumstances of your baby's death and your baby's gestation, we may need to inform the Coroner as part of standard procedures. We will inform you of this and discuss potential timelines in terms of obtaining results from your baby's post-mortem.

Induction and delivery of your baby

There may be the option to let labour happen naturally, however this may take a couple of days, or sometimes longer. The doctor will discuss the possibility of inducing your labour. This may be started off by taking some medication followed by a short period of rest at home. You will be given a date and time for admission some 36-48 hours later for the induction. Occasionally the tablet may cause some bleeding or even contraction pains (similar to strong period pains) and if this occurs you should ring the Emergency Room on 01 8171700 and speak to a midwife. You can return at any time if you are feeling unable to cope at home. More commonly you may experience some milder pain and in this case you could stay at home and use standard pain relief. Following admission to hospital you will receive tablets vaginally that will bring on further contractions and labour. Repeated doses of tablets may be necessary to bring on labour; this varies from woman to woman, and takes an average of 24 hours following the initial dose.

Depending on how many weeks pregnant you are, the other option for inducing your labour is by breaking your waters and administering medication via a drip to start your contractions. All types of pain relief will usually be available to you, including an epidural. Occasionally an epidural may not be possible if you have an infection, if you have a problem with your blood clotting, or if your labour progresses rapidly which can happen at early gestations. All steps will be taken to ensure you have the pain relief that you need and are supported during this time

We know that this is a very difficult time, and throughout it, your partner, friend or family member can be with you at all times if you wish. You will receive support from the midwives and doctors who are there to answer any queries you have during your stay. Your partner or support person may stay with you at all times. When in labour, you will usually be cared for in the Gynaecology ward or the Delivery Suite depending on how many weeks pregnant you are and your clinical condition. You should be able to have adequate pain relief as you wish.

Seeing and holding your Baby after birth

You will have the opportunity to see and hold your baby immediately after birth if you wish to do so. Following the birth of your baby, he or she can be dressed and wrapped in a blanket. You may of course like the opportunity to do this yourself. You may like to wait a little while after the birth before seeing your baby, or you may decide not to see your baby at all. You can bring in your own baby clothes and blankets, or we can provide some for you. You can use your own phone or camera if you would like to take some pictures of your baby. When your condition allows, you will be transferred to the Gynaecology Ward if you have been in the Delivery Suite, you will be offered a single room. Your baby can remain with you for some time after he/she had been born if you wish. When you are ready, your baby will be brought to the Mortuary.

What happens next?

This will be a very difficult, confusing and emotional time for you and your family. The Bereavement Team and the staff you meet in the hospital will be available over the coming days to discuss what needs to be done, and what your wishes are. We will inform you of your choices, and support you with making whatever arrangements you decide on when planning your baby's funeral. We can also discuss your wishes around having a post mortem examination for your baby if this is something you want to consider.

If you have other children at home, you may be concerned about how to tell them what has happened, and how they might react. Our Bereavement Medical Social Worker can talk to you and offer advice and support with this, and give you appropriate information to help you when you tell your other children. If you wish you can see her today (if available), or phone her after you go home.

If you go home today

Before you leave today, you will be given a card with this purple Bereavement Symbol and your details on it. When you return to the hospital please show it to staff on your arrival. This will make staff aware of your very sensitive circumstances, and should ensure you are taken care of immediately and directed to the appropriate department as quickly as possible.



You have any concerns after you go home, the Emergency Room is open 24 hours a day. You can phone and speak with a midwife, or come and be seen there at any time Telephone **01 817 1700** ask for the Emergency Room.

The following members of staff are available to speak with if you would like more information, and are available to offer you whatever support and assistance you need after your baby is born.

Monday-Friday 8am- 5pm:

Bereavement Support Midwife:	01 8171700 Mobile: 087 682 2639	Bleep 777
Bereavement Medical Social Worker	01 817 1700	Bleep 699
Chaplain	01 817 1700	Bleep 334
Evenings, Saturday, Sunday & Bank Holidays:		
Assistant Director of Midwifery	01 817 1700	Bleep 350

If you wish to find out more information, you can access the Rotunda Hospital bereavement information and postmortem Information booklets online.



[www.rotunda.ie/rotunda-pdfs/
bereavement/information_for_parents_
whose_baby_has_died.pdf](http://www.rotunda.ie/rotunda-pdfs/bereavement/information_for_parents_whose_baby_has_died.pdf)



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