

COUNSELLING & SUPPORT

At any time, you can call your family doctor or maternity care provider for support

You may also self-refer to the following community resources:

Cowichan Valley Hospice Society

Offers support and information to those grieving the loss of a loved one
(250) 701-4242

Public Health Nursing

Ask for an appointment with a health nurse
Duncan: (250) 709-3050
Lake Cowichan: (250) 749-6878

Kwun'atsustul Counselling

Cowichan Tribes' counselling support
(778) 422-3122

Cowichan District Hospital Spiritual Care

Spiritual Health Practitioner
Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and alternate Thursdays
(250) 737-2000 Ext. 44289

Healing Hearts Foundation

Support group for families grieving the loss of a baby.
Meets the first Tuesday of the month in Victoria
(250) 889-0652

Compassionate Friends

Offering grief education and hope for the future to all families experiencing the death of a child at any age

HELPFUL INTERNET RESOURCES

www.pailnetwork.ca

Canadian organization providing information and support

www.postpartum.org

Mothers supporting mothers

www.miscarriageassociation.org.uk

Provides support and information to anyone affected by miscarriage

www.nationalshare.org

US organization providing support online and by phone

www.tcfcanada.net

Grief support for the loss of a child

www.victoriahospice.org

Grief support

www.healthlinkbc.ca

Providing medical information on miscarriage

Coping with an

Early Pregnancy Loss



Cowichan Maternity Clinic



Cowichan Valley
Division of Family Practice
A GPSC Initiative

Brochure developed with the support of the Cowichan District Medical Society

MISCARRIAGE

WHAT IS A MISCARRIAGE?

A miscarriage is an unexpected loss of a pregnancy before 20 weeks (5 months).

Miscarriage is common. 25% of women will have a miscarriage in their lifetime. Most miscarriages occur in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy.

WHAT CAUSES A MISCARRIAGE?

Most often, the cause of a miscarriage is unknown.

Routine activities such as exercise, lifting, sexual intercourse, travel, heavy work and stress do not cause miscarriages.

No activities (such as bed rest) or treatments have been proven to prevent or reduce the chance of miscarriage.

There are some medical conditions that could increase the risk of miscarriage so it is a good idea to follow-up with your family physician.

WHAT CAN I EXPECT DURING?

Most women experience bleeding and cramping during a miscarriage. It is normal to have heavy bleeding or moderate-to-severe pain for 2-3 hours, after which the bleeding should be more like a normal period. It is normal to experience some bleeding or spotting for up to 2 weeks. Your breasts may leak small amounts of fluid, which is normal.

Avoid the following while you are bleeding:

- * Tampons (maxi-pads are okay)
- * Baths (showers are okay)
- * Going for a swim
- * Having sexual intercourse

Call the Cowichan Maternity Clinic or go to the nearest Emergency Department if you have:

- * heavy bleeding (soaking through 2 or more maxi pads in **2 hours**)
- * Fever over 38°C (100°F)
- * Bleeding lasting for longer than 2 weeks
- * Foul smelling vaginal discharge

WHAT CAN I EXPECT AFTER?

It is normal to feel sad and upset about your miscarriage and it is important to care for yourself during this time and get rest. Other members of your family may also be grieving during this time.

Remember to take time to grieve your loss.

Losing a pregnancy can be like any other loss of a loved one. There is no "right" way to grieve; everyone is different. Allow yourself to cry; but, not crying does not mean you do not remember.

GETTING PREGNANT AGAIN

If you choose to try to get pregnant again, it is recommended that you wait until you have 1 normal period before you try to get pregnant.

Most women have a normal period 4-8 weeks after a miscarriage.

Even if you've had one miscarriage, your risk of another miscarriage is not increased.

You may find that you are more anxious in your next pregnancy or have a hard time becoming emotionally attached. If this occurs, it is important to discuss this with your doctor.