

# ARC Mental Health Information Series

*This document is intended to be information only and does not replace the opinion of a health provider.*

## Perinatal loss and grief

Perinatal loss is the loss of a baby during pregnancy or delivery. It is a common experience, with as many as 10 to 15% of pregnancies ending in loss. The 4 types of perinatal loss are infertility, chemical pregnancy, miscarriage and stillbirth.



### Symptoms of grief

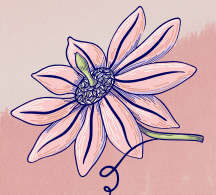
Grief reactions after a perinatal loss can cause physical symptoms similar to symptoms of depression. For some families, the physical symptoms of grief can be severe enough to interfere with their ability to function at work or school, keep up with responsibilities at home, and care for other children.

Physical symptoms may include:

- Sleeping problems, either sleeping too much or too little
- Appetite loss
- Stomach problems
- Fatigue
- Feeling weak or run down

Psychological symptoms may include:

- Overwhelm, shock, or numbness
- Isolation
- Anger
- Guilt and shame
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Suicidal thoughts
- Complicated grief



## How to cope with the grief of loss

- Reach out for support - Remaining connected with people during this time can help you cope
- Attend a support group - Support groups and group therapy are available for families dealing with a perinatal loss. They allow you to meet with other families who have experienced a loss and share your experiences with one another. These groups are typically run by mental health professionals and are available online and in-person.
- Speak with a grief counsellor - If you are having a hard time grieving pregnancy loss or feel that your support system is not enough, you can benefit from speaking with a mental health professional who specializes in grief counselling.
- Honour your unborn child - Some families find solace in commemorating their unborn child. You can do this in whatever way feels special to you.
- Practice physical self-care - Prioritize your physical well-being because it impacts your emotional health as well. Focus on eating healthy foods, drinking water, getting rest, and avoiding alcohol.

## Resources available

Rosa Caporicci - Licensed psychotherapist

Offers grief counselling for perinatal loss: stillbirth, miscarriage, pregnancy termination, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Telephone: (514) 266-0531, email: [info@ndgtherapy.com](mailto:info@ndgtherapy.com), website: [www.ndgtherapy.com](http://www.ndgtherapy.com)

West Island Women's Centre

Offers support group for women coping with a miscarriage, still birth or infant death.

Telephone: (514) 781-8529, email: [outreach@wiwc.ca](mailto:outreach@wiwc.ca), website: [www.wiwc.ca](http://www.wiwc.ca)

MAM MARRAINE AUTOUR DE LA MATERNITE: PERINATAL GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

2060 HOLMES ST., ST-HUBERT, QC J4T 1R8

Telephone: (450) 904-1458, website: [www.mam.qc.ca](http://www.mam.qc.ca).

Myra's Kids Foundation. Monthly grief and bereavement support groups for children and teens and also for parents and extended family.

We Also Mourn: a support group for men who have experienced perinatal loss.

Telephone: (438) 346-7989, website: [myraskids.ca](http://myraskids.ca)

CLSC St-Hubert - (450) 443-7400

CLSC Richelieu - (450) 658-7561

CLSC Brossard - (450) 445-4452

811 Info-Santé, press 9 for English

CLSC St-Jean-sur-Richelieu - (450) 358-2572



*Financial contribution from*



Public Health  
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé  
publique du Canada

