

Perinatal Loss

Do Say:

- "I am so sorry."
- "I don't know what to say."
- "Would you like to talk about it?"
- "Did you give your baby a name?"
- "I am here and I want to listen."
- "How are other family members doing with all this?"

Don't:

- Don't call the baby a "fetus" or "it."
- Don't change the subject when they cry or mention their dead baby.
- Don't say "You are young, you can have others."
- Don't search for something positive to say, i.e. "this happened for the best."
- Don't ask a pregnant woman "Will this be your first child?"
- Don't dominate conversation by asking one question after another.
- Don't avoid the couple because of your discomfort.

As a Professional:

- Remind them that their body does not know their baby died, i.e., breast filling with milk.
- Prepare them for the fact that family and friends may feel uncomfortable listening or even talking about the baby.
- Explain that everyone grieves differently, and how it may affect relationships.
- Help them understand that others will forget while they still remember.
- Don't ignore the spouse by looking at or talking only to the mother.
- Talk about the emotions they may experience.