



Things to Consider While in the Hospital

- ❖ **Spending time with your baby:** You may have unlimited time spent with your baby. You may hold your baby, call him/her by name. You can give your baby a bath or dress him or her. Examine every feature of your baby.
- ❖ **Pictures:** Pictures-Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep is a non-profit organization that provides volunteer photographers to come take pictures of you and your baby free of charge. This will offer wonderful memories of your baby for many years to come.
- ❖ **Mementos & Remembrance Items:** As many as you can imagine. Footprints, handprints, foot moldings, lock of hair. Take as many as you'd like.
- ❖ **Making Memories:** Consider rocking, singing, or reading a book to your baby. You can treasure this song or book forever.
- ❖ **Outfit/blanket:** Maybe you have a special outfit and blanket that you had planned to dress your baby in or give them as a security blanket. Take pictures with your baby in their outfit or with their blanket. Hospitals often have burial outfits that you can dress your baby in.
- ❖ **Baptism/Dedication:** You may want to contact a member of your church or chaplain from the hospital to provide support and guidance for you. They can also baptize or dedicate your baby if you wish.

In the event that you want to know more about what caused your baby's death, there may be options for further testing. Please talk to your healthcare provider about these and other options that may be available:

- ❖ Autopsy
- ❖ Placenta testing
- ❖ Blood tests for Mother to identify potential of infection
- ❖ Genetic testing

Things to Consider At Home

- ❖ **Create a Memory Box:** Place all of your mementos in this box; everything from the hospital, baby's hospital band, footprints, ultrasound pictures, pregnancy test if you still have it. Be sure to save cards and notes from family and friends.
- ❖ **Dry Flowers from Bouquets or Memorial Service:** I kept so many flowers and made Christmas ornaments, put them in a shadow box, and a mason jar to use as decoration in my home.
- ❖ **Keep a Journal:** Write down your experiences. This makes it easy to look back and see how far you've come in your grief journey on those days that you just feel like you're stuck. It may also be beneficial to someone in the future to read.
- ❖ **Plant Flowers or a Tree in Your Baby's Honor:** This is a great way to have a daily reminder of your baby that is beautifully blossoming in your yard. This may also be a non-traditional way to hold a memorial service if you should choose.
- ❖ **Pick a Color or Thing to Remember Your Baby:** Pick out a color that you associate with your baby or an animal or thing, like a butterfly. We chose to paint a room on our home with the color we associate with Rowan and that is Rowan's room. If you choose an animal you can collect remembrance items of that animal. People also find comfort in seeing these creatures when they're out and about & not expecting it.

Planning a Goodbye

No one can tell you what is the right choice for you and your family; you do what feels right. And know that this decision does not have to be today. You can wait several months to make this choice.

- ❖ **Burial or Cremation:** It is up to you whether you would like your baby to be buried or cremated. Both of these services are often offered at no cost for the loss of a baby.
- ❖ **Memorial Service:** It is completely up to you whether you have a memorial service or not and you certainly do not have to make this decision today. Additionally, you decide what is best regarding who you want to attend. Just family or everyone that knows and loves you? There are traditional viewings that you can do at the funeral home, you can have a service at a church, or you can have a graveside service. You can also choose a non-traditional way of memorializing your baby. You can plant a tree or do a balloon release with friends or family.