



## Suggestions from a Grieving Parent

I can only provide suggestions for you based on my own personal experience and the suggestions that were given to me. There are some decisions regarding autopsy, burial and cremation that are personal decisions that I cannot provide any insight on. I pray that you will have a peace with these and choose what is best for your family.

- ❖ Hold your baby. Kiss your baby. Talk to your baby. These precious hours or days in the hospital are all that you will have. We sang a song to our daughter, but I wish we had read a book to her so there was yet another memory I had to cherish and remember her by.
- ❖ Too many mementos of your baby is impossible. Create as many special moments as you can. Put her in an outfit that you can take home and keep. Take as many footprints and handprints as you can. Many of the hospitals have small rings included in their infant loss packets that you can put on your baby's finger and then take home. Take impressions or molds of hands and feet.
- ❖ Today pictures may not feel right, but in many months or years, these will likely be cherished. I find myself reflecting once at least once a week on these beautiful photos that were taken of our family and our precious daughter.
- ❖ A memorial service for your baby does not have to be done this week or next week or even this month. You can take your time planning what you would like, but I do feel that this can help you heal and provide some closure. Personally, we wanted the service to be done as soon as possible. It felt like we could not start the real grieving until it was done. But many families I know never had services, or waited several months to do it to ensure that it was perfectly planned and included everyone they wanted there. A service does not have to be a traditional service with a viewing at the funeral home or at a church or even at the graveside. You can make the memorial service what you want it to be. Maybe in a few months you can plant a tree and invite family or friends over as you plant the tree in honor of your baby. The options are endless but take your time making this decision.
- ❖ Think about things you may want to send with your baby whether through burial or cremation. Personally, I wrapped our daughter in my wedding veil, placed a letter I wrote to her in her casket, and made identical charm bracelets, one for me and one for her.