

ENGLISCH

Early Pregnancy Loss

during the first trimester



Information & Education
in and around Munich

Taking the time you need



During pregnancy, many speak of “to be expecting”. If that expectation suddenly comes to an end, it can feel as though an entire world has collapsed.

At the same time, there are many things to decide and to do, which can be very overwhelming. But the pregnant person and their loved ones should TAKE THEIR TIME to decide on the next steps. After the first shock it is important to be informed about rights, options and support services. This brochure is intended to provide gentle guidance and reassurance.

Verena Dietl,
Mayor Munich

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Possible causes of pregnancy loss

One in about three pregnancies ends in an early loss. This statistical knowledge does not lessen the individual pain. Some reasons an embryo may stop evolving are:

- genetic or chromosomal abnormalities
- blood clotting disorders
- certain infections
- immune reactions

If losses occur more than once, a medical evaluation is recommended to look for underlying causes.

What does pregnancy loss mean?

Spontaneous miscarriage: vaginal bleeding or spotting, pelvic cramping and lower back pain are common symptoms that the pregnancy is ending unexpectedly.

“silent miscarriage” or missed miscarriage: during a routine check-up, the heartbeat is no longer detected, often without prior symptoms. The pregnant person then chooses how to proceed with the process of birth.

Ectopic pregnancy: when the embryo implants outside the uterus, medical treatment is required to protect the pregnant person's health.

Three pathways after a confirmed loss

1. Wait-and-see approach

The body may recognize on its own that the pregnancy has ended and starts the process of releasing the pregnancy tissue.

For some, allowing the body to lead, can feel healing, though it requires patience. Bleeding may begin days or weeks later. Support from a midwife or health-care provider is highly recommended.

It is possible at any time to end the waiting period and choose one of the following options.



2. Medication-assisted process

Medication can gently start uterine contractions to help complete the loss of tissue. Many see this as a middle ground between waiting and surgery. It allows some planning while remaining less invasive.

Clear guidance from healthcare professionals about possible side effects and full support from a trusted person is necessary. To deal with the contractions, pain and bleeding it is important to talk to healthcare professionals before taking any medication.



3. Surgical procedure

A brief procedure under anesthesia (such as dilation and curettage) removes pregnancy tissue. Some choose this option for its predictability or because it feels emotionally more manageable. A doctor will explain potential risks and aftercare.



GOOD TO KNOW: Unless there is an urgent medical reason such as:

- infection
- heavy bleeding
- relevant pre-existing conditions
- ectopic pregnancy

there is usually no rush and enough time for making a thoughtful decision.



The process of an early pregnancy loss

With or without medication, the body experiences contractions and bleeding. Cramping can last for hours or occur in waves over several days. Pain relief, antispasmodic medication, warmth, or a soothing bath can be very helpful.



GOOD TO KNOW: A woman should not be alone in giving early birth, so that help can be provided any time if needed: heavy bleeding, dizziness or low blood pressure.

Meeting and farewell

Some parents or pregnant individuals want to consciously look at the small embryo and placenta. A midwife can explain ways to do this gently – for example, using a household sieve or colander to collect the pregnancy tissue.

These choices are deeply personal and entirely optional.

The Water Method is a way to preserve a tiny little baby after miscarriage or stillbirth for a little while. Use a small

container, jar or bowl filled with cold water, so that the tissue and blood residues that are still on the body can gently dissolve in the water. The baby can be kept in the water for a few days, or until what-ever ceremony is planned.



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Use QR Code for more explanations about the Water Method:

» dein-sternenkind.eu

Rights and support

Midwife care

Every woman has the right to receive care from a midwife during pregnancy and postpartum, regardless of the stage of pregnancy.



The HebaVaria association will help you find specially trained midwives to accompany you through that special time:

» hebavaria.de

Symbolic registration

Even in early pregnancy, parents can request a certificate of existence for their baby at the local registry office, no matter the gestational age.

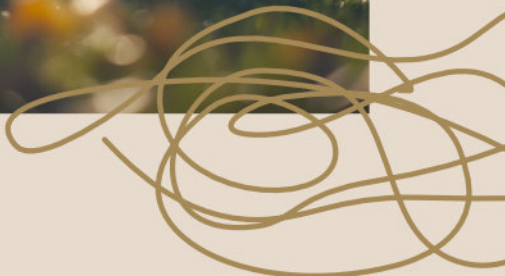


Use the QR code to download the document required for the application.

Recovery time

Early pregnancy loss is still a birth experience. Physical recovery may include postpartum bleeding, uterine cramping, and significant hormonal changes. It is not only a physical loss, it is also an emotional loss and emotional healing requires time.

Currently, a medical leave note is needed for work absence. Special employment protections and maternal leave apply after the 13th week of pregnancy.





Farewell and rituals

In the State of Bavaria, all babies who die during pregnancy – sometimes called “Sternenkinder”, “angel babies” or “born sleeping” – are offered a respectful burial, even at the earliest stages.

Hospitals provide communal ceremonies and non-denominational memorial services. Clinical pastoral care can answer any further questions about funeral services. Every clinic in Munich has a common grave on a cemetery. Private gynecology ambulances make use of the option of an anonymous burial.



Families may also arrange a private burial, create their own meaningful rituals or attend one of the regularly held memorial services.



Use the QR code to get an overview over memorial services in Munich:
» sternenkindfamilie.de/gedenkfeiern

Grieving the loss of a baby

The loss of a baby in pregnancy can bring deep sadness, pain, fear, guilt, or shame. Grief is a natural response – not a problem to be solved, but a process to be respected. It is not only the loss of a baby, but also of the hopes and plans connected to this pregnancy. There is no need to “bounce back to normal” quickly.

Grief is not a problem. It doesn't need solutions.

— Megan Devine, Psychotherapist

Helpful things to do:

Grief takes energy – so it is good to do things that are good for you and help you to recharge your batteries. Here are some ideas:

- exercise in nature or movement in general
- creative expressions, creating a memory box for example
- supportive conversations – can help replenish strength.



Grief in relationship:

Grief within a partnership can look different. Each partner may feel the loss differently or focus more on caring for the other. Each person grieves in their own way and in their own time.

Including siblings:

Even young children can be told, in an age-appropriate way, that the baby has died and was born too soon. Including them in simple rituals can help them understand and process the family's feelings.

Finding support in and around Munich

Munich offers many resources for people who have experienced pregnancy loss. Individual or couple counseling, creative workshops, peer groups, and memorial gatherings.



Further information:
» [hausderfamilie.de/
fehlgeburt](https://hausderfamilie.de/fehlgeburt)

Knowledge about miscarriages should become common knowledge

Every pregnant person should know their rights and the medical options available in the event of pregnancy loss. This brochure is intended to provide guidance and assistance – during the period of trying to conceive, during pregnancy and in the acute situation of a loss.

This brochure was created by the “Sternenkind” consultation service at the “Haus der Familie” in cooperation with the “Münchner Sternenkind Netzwerk”.

All medical information has been reviewed by gynecologists and midwives.

With kind support



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Editor:



» hausderfamilie.de/sternenkinder



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