

Caring for Your Child's Remains When Miscarriage Occurs at Home

If we could only hold your hand as you endure the emotional and physical sufferings of miscarriage, I promise you, we would. If we could only cradle your precious child, however small at birth, and prepare them for burial for you, I promise you, we would. If we could take this pain and grief away from you, I promise you, we would.

We are so sorry that we can't. But it is our prayer that this guide for helping you to care for your child's remains will be solace, comfort and practical help to you, as you navigate this loss.

There are some things you need to know first, as a matter of preparation:

- Your baby is small.** Very small. By definition, a miscarriage is a prenatal loss that occurs before 20 weeks gestation. **At most baby is about 4-inches in length. At their tiniest, they may not be discernable at all through the gestational sac, which looks like an ovular sac of tissue.**
- You do not have to search through the amniotic sac to find the remains of your child. Only do this if you are comfortable.** Your child can be buried or cremated as is, so please do not let this be a barrier to you in preserving their remains.
- Your miscarriage may take hours or days.** Please do not hesitate to seek medical attention if you are concerned or are experiencing excessive blood loss. Consult your doctor about signs and symptoms to watch for that demand emergency attention.
- It is possible that your miscarriage will not be completed at home,** and that you may need additional medical intervention to avoid a dangerous infection. Always alert your medical provider when you have had a miscarriage.

What is included in your Miscarriage Delivery Aid:

- 1 strainer
- 1 squirt bottle
- 1 vessel (sizes vary) and 1 velvet pouch for vessel
- 1 pair of gloves
- 1 single-use crazy-glue tube

What you will need to obtain yourself (or instruct a support person to obtain):

- Saline solution** (contact lens solution works, a generic brand is fine)
 - If you don't have saline, and you don't need to preserve the remains for very long, that is okay, just use clean water instead.*

How to use your Miscarriage Delivery Aid at home:

1. Once you begin spotting or cramping, bring the strainer with you during each trip to the bathroom.
2. As soon as you sit down on the toilet place the strainer under your bottom, and strain everything out of your urine stream. This will allow you to catch and recover any pregnancy tissue and your child's remains. You may find the following: blood clots, placenta, amniotic sac, umbilical cord, and your baby.
3. Use the squirt bottle (filled with water) to clean off everything that is recovered. If the amniotic sac is recovered, you may not be able to see your child inside the sac, even once you clean it off with water.
4. If you physically handle any pieces of fetal tissue, wear the provided gloves, or other medical grade nitrile gloves.
5. Place any recovered remains into the provided vessel with saline solution. Use the provided crazy glue to secure the lid to the vessel, to ensure an airtight seal and to avoid leakage. You may place the vessel into the velvet pouch if you desire.
6. Place the vessel into a refrigerator at home until burial, cremation and/ or until they are transferred to the care of a funeral home. This is important for preservation purposes.
7. The *Behold Your Child* ministry of the Archdiocese of Dubuque suggests placing a lit candle near the refrigerator as a sign and symbol of the importance of the child's remains.

****If you are unable to recover remains during a trip to the bathroom:**

Clean off the strainer, let it air dry and dispose of the gloves. Begin the process again during each trip to the bathroom until you believe that the miscarriage is complete.

For additional help, support and resources please visit:

<https://www.diocs.org/Offices/Respect-Life-Apostolate/Miscarriage-and-Infant-Loss-Support>