

Understanding what happened to your baby



*Your healthcare team is here
for you at this very difficult time.
We are so sorry for your loss.*



Holding this brochure probably means you've lost your beautiful baby. We are so sorry.

When you are grieving, making decisions can be very hard.

You may have been asked to think about investigations to look at what happened to your baby. You may not have heard of these things before. You might have lots of questions or worries – most families do. This is one of the hardest decisions you will make.

Not every stillbirth needs to be looked at in the same way. You can talk to your health team about what is best for you, your family and your baby.

“Hospital staff were talking about investigations and tests for baby and I couldn't make those decisions on my own. My family needed to help me decide.”

Your values, culture and religion are important and respected in this journey.

Don't be afraid to tell your health team about this. You may want to think about:

- Who you need to help you make decisions? Do you need your Mum, Dad, Aunt, an elder or religious leader?
- Do you need an interpreter?
- Do you need someone to help you share your thoughts or write down your questions?

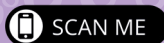
- Are there any special items that you would like to stay with your baby?
- What does your culture, spirituality or religion say about when you should bury your baby?
- Are there any customs or rituals to think about?

We hope the information here will help you work out what's best for your family and baby.


“Everything was a blur for me. I was so sad. How could I decide about the autopsy in that moment?”

You will find a QR code (a link you can scan with your phone that will take you to a website) on this page. Here you will find:

- A video talking about the different types of autopsy and investigations and how your baby will be treated.
**Please note this video may be upsetting for some.*
- A video with comments from other parents on why they made the decisions they did.
- A copy of Guiding Conversations.



You can find more information here about autopsy and other investigation options.



“As a father I felt that we needed to do what our religion tells us to do, so I wanted to talk to an Elder to help me decide.”

This is your baby and your journey. Whatever you decide, your choices will be understood and respected.

Some questions you might have when thinking about options to find out what happened to your baby:

- Will I definitely get answers?
- How long do I have to decide?
- What is an autopsy?
- What is a babygram?
- What other things can be done to help find answers?
- Where will my baby be taken and for how long?
- Who will take care of my baby?
- What happens during an autopsy or other investigations (eg MRI)?
- Can I see my baby afterwards and what will they look like?
- When can I expect the results and how will I get these?

Looking into what happened to your baby is an important part of the care for you and your baby. Your health care team is here to support you and help you make decisions. They follow information found in ‘Clinical Practice Guidelines’, which tells them how to best help you at this time. A parent copy of this (Guiding Conversations) is on the QR code.

If you choose to have an autopsy, a perinatal pathologist (a trained medical professional) will perform this. They will take the best care of your baby.

“We chose to have an autopsy, some parents don’t.”

Whatever you decide, all of the people trying to help you find answers will take very good care of your baby.

You are not alone. Many parents who lost their baby had the same questions you have. You can see what they told us on this page and in the video.

These resources should not replace talking with your healthcare team. Ask them about any questions or concerns you have after reading this booklet and watching these videos. Take your time to watch these. You can pause or replay as many times as you need. There is also no rush to make your decision. Your support team will be able to tell you how much time you have. You can still spend time with your baby.

