



Honoring Your Baby's Memory

When a family experiences the loss of a pregnancy or a newborn, it is an incredibly challenging time. However, honoring your baby can provide a meaningful way to create lasting memories and begin to accept the loss.

There are many ways to remember your baby, such as having a memorial service, planting a tree or flower garden, or writing a poem or letter. Depending on when the loss occurred, some of these ideas may seem more appropriate than others. But there is no wrong way to remember your baby, and it is important to do whatever feels right and gives you comfort.

Name Your Baby

Giving your baby a name is an important part of the grieving process. Even if the loss happened early in the pregnancy, or years ago, giving your baby a name can help you feel more connected. If the gender of the baby is unknown, consider choosing a gender-neutral name.

Light a Candle

Light a candle or a lantern on special days throughout the year, such as:

- Your due date
- Date of your loss
- Birthday
- Mother's Day
- Father's Day
- Holidays
- National Wave of Light Day (October 15th at 7-8pm)

Plant a Memorial Garden

Plant a small memorial garden and plan to expand it every year. You can add a baby, angel or butterfly statue to watch over the garden. Choose perennial plants and flowers that are symbolic of remembering such as white lilies, rosemary, forget-me-not flowers, or white daisies. Consider painting stones in memory of your baby and adding them to the garden. This can be a particularly therapeutic way to involve children in honoring their sibling.

Alternatively, you can plant a tree to honor the loss of your child. If you are lacking the space for a garden, reach out to your local community. Many municipal parks allow the purchase and dedication of a tree or a park bench in honor of your baby.

Memorials

- Attend an annual community memorial service in remembrance of your baby.
- Attend a remembrance walk.
- Plan a private memorial service.
- Have a butterfly or balloon release.
- Buy a cake and celebrate your baby's birthday each year.
- Hang a special ornament and/or a stocking for your baby each year at Christmas.
- Write a letter or diary to your baby.
- Create a baby book.

Keepsakes

- Have your baby's clothes made into a teddy bear.
- Order a stuffed animal that weighs the same as your baby. (Molly Bears)
- Create a keepsake or memory box and fill it with tangible keepsakes such as:
 - photos of when you were pregnant
 - ultrasound pictures
 - blankets
 - baby clothes
 - pressed flowers
 - cards
 - leaves from your memory garden
- Have a quilt made from your baby's clothes and/or blankets.

Memorial Jewelry

- Buy a piece of jewelry such as a locket and have the baby's name inscribed on it.
- Start a charm bracelet, add charms on significant dates.
- Have a necklace made with your child's name.
- Wear your child's birthstone (choose either the month of your loss or the month of your due date - there is no wrong way to do this).
- Purchase jewelry or other items with your baby's monogram.
- Have a piece of jewelry made with your baby's hair, ashes, breastmilk, or placenta.

Other Ways to Remember Your Baby

- Is there a scent or fragrance that reminds you of your baby? Wear it when you want to think of him or her.
- Listen to a special song that reminds you of your baby. Listen to it on repeat and cry if you feel the urge to do so.
- Keep your baby's worn clothes in a sealed bag to help preserve their smell.
- Create a space in your home dedicated to displaying your baby's photos and keepsakes.
- Get a tattoo of your baby's footprints, heartbeat or a word or symbol that is significant to you.

Create New Family Memories

Even though your baby is no longer physically with you, he or she will always be a part of your family. When taking family photos, consider including a special item such as a weighted stuffed animal, photo of your baby, or other special item to honor their place in the family. Alternatively, you can ask your photographer to photoshop your child into the photo.

Community Involvement

- Start a foundation or a non-profit in honor of your child's name.
- Have a day each year that you do a random act of kindness in honor of your child and encourage others to do the same.
- Donate to a charity that does research on pregnancy loss or helps bereaved parents.
- Donate to a local charity in your child's name.
- Donate children's books to a local library each year in honor of your child.
- Raise funds for your child's cause.
- Donate grief or comfort items to a local hospital.
- Share your birth story or create a blog or website dedicated to your baby.
- Donate your breastmilk to a baby in need.

Name a Star

- Name a star for your baby at StarRegistry.com



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