

Fanau oti / Fanau le au
Materoto
Stillbirth

(12 weeks – full term)



Although the legal definition of a Stillbirth is a baby being born after 20 weeks of pregnancy, we at Baby Loss NZ define stillbirth as a baby born after 12 weeks of pregnancy. Finding out your baby has died can be one the hardest things you will ever hear. Some mothers are concerned about baby's movements and are told at an ultrasound that baby has died. Some mothers find out at a routine scan. The words "I am sorry, we can't find a heartbeat" are so hard to take in and accept. "It's not fair", "Why", "You must be wrong, please try again" are very common thoughts.

Things to consider

The time between hearing the news and delivering your baby can help you plan for your baby's birth and the time you have with baby.

Would you like photos while baby is still inside you?

Who would you like at the birth with you?

Would you like music playing during the birth?

Do you want to see/hold your baby?

Do you have special clothes or a blanket you would like baby to be dressed/wrapped in?

Do you want to have time alone with baby?

Would you like whanau/aiga/friends to meet baby?

Do you want to name your baby?

Do you want to have a service for your baby?

You can ask for someone to talk you through what to expect during the birth and you can ask what your baby may look like.

These are just a few suggestions. Please remember to ask as many questions as you need to. You may need things repeating several times before you really hear them. This is very normal. It can help to have a support person with you who can be a second ear and maybe take notes.

Each parent is entitled to their own feelings and should try to respect the other's feelings. Talking, holding each other cannot only help you to learn to live with your grief but often brings you closer as well.