

Milestones

Some suggestions for getting through the days that may feel particularly difficult

After losing your baby, certain dates and milestones can bring grief back very strongly. Sometimes these feelings are expected, such as your baby's due date or anniversary. At other times, a date or occasion may catch you completely by surprise.

You might find yourself thinking about your baby more, feeling anxious or tearful, struggling to concentrate, or wanting to withdraw from others. **There is no right or wrong way to feel.**

Dates that may feel difficult

You may find some of these days particularly hard:

- Your baby's due date
- The date you found out you were pregnant
- The date you lost your baby
- The date your baby was born
- The anniversary of your baby's death
- Your baby's first birthday
- Pregnancy or baby milestones
- Seeing someone else reach a milestone your baby would have reached
- Mother's Day or Father's Day

- Christmas, birthdays or family celebrations
- Returning to places connected with your pregnancy or baby
- Future pregnancies or seeing pregnancy announcements

You may also experience difficult feelings on days you didn't expect to be significant.

Before a difficult date

Think about what you might need.

It can help to consider the day in advance and ask yourself:

What might make this day a little easier?

You could:

- Let someone you trust know that the date is approaching.
- Decide whether you want company or some time alone.
- Reduce your commitments or give yourself permission to say no.
- Plan something gentle that feels meaningful to you.
- Think about whether you would like to remember your baby in some way.
- Arrange something comforting for afterwards.
- Let work, friends or family know if you need some additional understanding or flexibility.

You don't have to make plans if you don't want to. **It is also okay to simply get through the day.**

Remembering your baby

There is no right way to remember your baby.

You might choose to:

- Light a candle.
- Visit a special place.

- Look at photographs or keepsakes.
- Write a letter to your baby.
- Spend time in nature.
- Listen to music that reminds you of your baby.
- Create a memory box.
- Plant something in their memory.
- Say your baby's name.
- Take part in a remembrance event.
- Do something privately that feels meaningful to you.

Or you may choose **not to mark the date at all**. That is okay too.

When the date arrives

Try to take the day **one moment at a time**.

You don't have to be productive or pretend that everything is okay.

Think about the basics:

Eat something. Drink some water. Rest. Breathe. Be kind to yourself.

If emotions become overwhelming, try bringing your attention back to what is happening right now. You might take a slow walk, sit somewhere quiet, have a warm drink, listen to calming sounds or spend time with someone who makes you feel safe.

Give yourself permission

You are allowed to:

- Cry.
- Feel angry.
- Feel numb.
- Laugh.
- Enjoy part of the day.

- Change your mind.
- Say no.
- Talk about your baby.
- Not talk about your baby.
- Remember your baby.
- Take a break from remembering.

None of these things mean that you love or miss your baby any less.

After the difficult date

You may feel exhausted once the day has passed. Sometimes the emotions come afterwards rather than on the date itself.

Give yourself some space to recover. You might want a quiet day, extra rest or someone around you.

There is no timetable for grief.

If you are struggling

If a difficult date brings up feelings that feel impossible to manage, please reach out for support.

You can speak to someone you trust, your GP, midwife or other healthcare professional. You can also use the crisis and baby-loss support contacts provided in your **Mental Health & Crisis Support Following Baby Loss** resource.

You don't have to wait until you are at breaking point before asking for help.