

If you learn that something is seriously or fatally wrong with your developing fetus, you are faced with making a difficult decision. If you choose to interrupt the pregnancy, there are several resources available to help you during this difficult time.

NAF - National Abortion Federation
<http://www.prochoice.org/>
Hotline referral line 1-877-257-0012 for assistance finding a provider. For other information and other resources, including financial assistance, please call 1-800-772-9100.

Guttmacher Institute's Overview of State Abortion Law:
www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib_OAL.pdf

ACOL (Abortion Clinics OnLine)
<http://www.gynpages.com/>

Planned Parenthood
<http://www.plannedparenthood.org/health-topics/abortion-4260.asp>



Finding a provider near you:

<https://www.prochoice.org/Pregnant/find/>
or contact the NAF at the above number.

Please see this list of state regulations for abortion restriction laws in your area:

http://www.guttmacher.org/statecenter/spibs/spib_PLTA.pdf

For late-term providers please contact:

Germantown Reproductive Health Services
13233 Executive Park Drive
Germantown, Maryland 20874
(301) 353-9200

Southwestern Womens Options
522 Lomas Blvd NE
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87102-2454
(505) 242-7512

Boulder Abortion Clinic, P.C.
1130 Alpine Avenue
Boulder, Colorado 80304
(800) 535-1287
(303) 447-1361

All Women's Health North
9730 3rd Ave NE #200
Seattle, Washington 98115
(206) 985-9553

Why we make a "Heartbreaking Choice"

Pregnancy does not end happily for everyone. Sadly, some parents receive grim news that something has gone horribly wrong with their pregnancy, an event that in most cases was planned and much wanted. As a result they are faced with making a difficult decision about whether to continue with the pregnancy. We realize that all parents make a loving choice, one they feel is best for their family; however, regardless of the anomaly found, making that choice can be one of the most difficult ordeals anyone can face.

When facing a diagnosis of a severe or fatal birth defect, or if you have to consider your own health or the life of another child (such as in the case of selective reduction), it is the hardest decision of your life. All you ever want for your child is the best, most loving environment possible, to offer protection from suffering and pain. How can we offer protection when that child is still in the womb?

www.aheartbreakingchoice.com
www.aheartbreakingchoice.com/Forums/info@aheartbreakingchoice.com
forums@aheartbreakingchoice.com

This brochure was designed to offer information and support for parents who have terminated a much wanted pregnancy due to a poor prenatal diagnosis, problems with their own health, or for the health of another fetus (selective reduction). It was written by volunteers and is solely for informational purposes. The authors of this brochure are not trained medical professionals. The information contained herein is not intended to be, and should not be used as, a substitute for medical treatment by a health care professional. Please seek advice from your professional medical caregiver. The authors of this brochure can not be held legally responsible for any information contained herein.

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You've just received devastating news about your pregnancy. What do you do now?

For most women pregnancy is a time of joy and anticipation of a new life; but for some the news is not good. Have you learned that the wonderful life you thought you were going to be bringing home has a serious or fatal condition? Or that your life could be in danger if you continue your pregnancy? How do you choose to reduce a multiple pregnancy to save one child at the expense of another? What do you do? Where do you turn?

Although there are no available statistics* on how many women receiving a severe prenatal diagnosis choose to end the pregnancy, those who face this nightmare often feel alone. There is very little in the way of support programs for them. This brochure and the associated website www.aheartbreakingchoice.com are designed to help women through the difficult decision to terminate a much wanted pregnancy. We have resources to help you through this time!

*Note: available statistics show that out of all abortions performed, the percentage of women terminating for fetal or personal health was 13% and 12%, respectively in 2004:
<http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/journals/3711005.html>
<http://www.guttmacher.org/tables/370305/3711005t6.pdf>



Making the "Heartbreaking Choice" to terminate a pregnancy is never easy. It is fraught with difficult questions, love, and a fervent desire to prevent suffering.

There are things you don't want to think about at a time like this, but unfortunately they are things that need to be considered.

If you choose labor & delivery, consider the option of holding your baby.

Check with the chaplain at your local hospital or clergy if you would like to have your baby baptized or blessed.

Bring your own preemie hat and receiving blanket, or check to see if there is a local chapter of "Afghans for Angels" in your area.

Memorializing your baby:

Ask if the doctor can get hand or foot prints of your baby for you.

Ask about photos of your baby. If you don't want to see them now, you may ask that the photos be sealed in an envelope in case you decide to look at them later.

Bring a camera and take pictures, or ask the nurse to take pictures if you feel you can't; or check with a photographer.

Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep
<https://www.nowilaymedowntosleep.org/> offers the gift of free professional portraiture for infant loss. Some restrictions may apply.

Have a memorial service for your baby. Release a balloon or plant a tree or flowers in your baby's honor.

Consider making a donation to a children's charity such as March of Dimes or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

Keep a journal of your thoughts and memories, or keep a scrapbook of ultrasounds, gifts, and cards given to you during your pregnancy.

Have a necklace, bracelet, or anklet made with your baby's name or in memory of your baby.

Memorializing your baby continued...

**There are many companies that offer memorial keepsakes. Please check our online list of resources here:
<http://www.aheartbreakingchoice.com/Information/MemorialIdeas.aspx>**

This is a very sensitive subject, but you have a choice in how your baby's remains are handled. Ask the hospital or doctor about your rights to the remains and options of burial, cremation, or not receiving the remains depending on your wishes. Be aware that you may have to make the arrangements for burial or cremation yourself.

Call your local funeral home to see if they will work with the hospital or clinic where you deliver or terminate; most funeral homes will be glad to make the arrangements for you.

Coping with grief:

The choice to terminate a much wanted pregnancy is still a loss and as such should be treated as any other loss of a loved one.

You may want to consider seeking counseling or speaking with a therapist. Please contact your local physician or genetic counselor for references.

You may wish to consult with your local clergy or hospital chaplain if you have any spiritual needs or concerns.

If you are having a hard time dealing with this loss, or if you have any thoughts of suicide, please seek help or contact the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Please see our list of books and online resources for more information on coping with loss and finding a support group. Or visit us online at www.aheartbreakingchoice.com/Information/Info.aspx.

A Heartbreaking Choice

Books for Loss and Grief (Listed Alphabetically)

A Silent Sorrow, Pregnancy Loss, by Ingrid Kohn, MSW and Perry-Lynn Moffitt with Isabelle A. Wilkins, M.D. Published by Routledge, 2000.

A Time to Decide, A Time to Heal: For Parents Making Difficult Decisions About Babies They Love, edited by Molly A. Minnick, published by www.pineapplebooks.com, 1992.

Difficult Decisions: For Families Whose Unborn Baby Has a Serious Problem, by Patricia Fertel, published by Centering Corporation www.centering.org, 2004.

Empty Arms: Coping After Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Infant Death, by Sherokee Ilse and Arlene Applebaum, published by Wintergreenpress, www.memoremedia.com, 2012.

Empty Cradle, Broken Heart Revised Edition: Surviving the Death of Your Baby, by Deborah L. Davis, published by Fulcrum Publishing, 1996.

Holding On & Letting Go: Facing an Unexpected Diagnosis in Pregnancy, edited by Vicki Culling, Published by Printing.com, www.holgbook.com/, 2013.

Our Heartbreaking Choices: Forty-Six Women Share Their Stories of Interrupting a Much-Wanted Pregnancy, published by IUniverse www.ourheartbreakingchoices.com, 2008.

Precious Lives, Painful Choices: A Prenatal Decision-Making Guide, by Sherokee Ilse, published by www.wintergreenpress.com, www.memoremedia.com, 1993.

Surviving Pregnancy Loss: A Complete Sourcebook for Women and Their Families, by Rochelle Friedman, M.D. and Bonnie Gradstein, published by Citadel, 1996.

Sunshine After the Storm: A Survival Guide for the Grieving Mother, by Alexa Bigwarfe, Lizzie Rogers, Starr Bryson, Regina Petsch, Kristi Bothur, Sheila Quirke, Jennie Goutet, Anna Whiston-Donaldson, Tova Gold, published by Kat Bigger Press, 2013.

Unspeakable Losses: Healing From Miscarriage, Abortion, And Other Pregnancy Loss, by Kim Kluger-Bell, published by William Morrow Paperbacks, 2000.