



Giving birth to your baby





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When your baby dies, it is really hard and upsetting for you.



This leaflet will help you understand all the information you need to know.

It tells you:



- what will happen when you give birth
- how you will give birth
- where you will give birth



It will help you make hard decisions about what you want to happen.

Waiting to give birth



Sometimes babies die before they are born. Or sometimes they die while they are being born.



If your baby dies while they are still inside you, you will still need to give birth to your baby.



Having to wait to give birth is a really upsetting and sad time for parents.

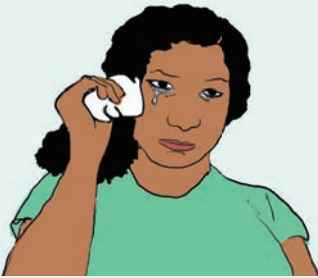


You will probably feel lots of different feelings all at once.



You might:

- be in pain



- feel upset and cry a lot



- be really quiet and sad



You might still feel your baby move inside you. This can be really upsetting for you.



You will probably be in shock. You might find it really hard to think about everything that is happening.

How you will give birth



Most people will give birth to their baby through their vagina. This is called **giving birth naturally**.

It is the safest way to give birth.



When you give birth naturally, you go through **labour**. **Labour** is when your body is trying to push your baby out.



If you cannot give birth this way, you will have an operation called a **caesarean section**. It is called a **C-section** for short.



Your midwife will support you the whole time and answer any questions you have.

Getting ready for labour



The midwife or doctor will have to do some tests first.

They will test your blood and your wee. They might also have to take some samples from inside your vagina.



We know this might not be nice for you. But these tests are important. They can help to understand more about you and why your baby died.



Sands staff have spoken to other people who have had babies that died.



People all said it is best for you to have support when you are in labour.

Where you will give birth



Most people decide to have their baby in the hospital.

You will go onto the labour ward if you are more than 20 weeks pregnant.



Midwives will make sure you get your own space away from other people.



The midwives will explain everything to you. They should tell you:

- where your baby will be born
- and**
- which pain relief medicine they can give you

You can ask them any questions you might have.

What to take into hospital



The hospital will give you a list of things you will need to bring with you.



Here are some extra things you might want to bring:

- something special for your baby to wear when they are born



- a teddy, a toy or something else special to put next to your baby



- a camera or phone to take some pictures of your baby

If your labour is induced



Being induced means that nurses give you some medicine to help start your labour.

Getting your body ready to be induced



You may be given some medicine to help get your body ready. This usually takes 1 or 2 days to work.



You may be able to go home while you wait for the medicine to work. It is best that you are not alone when you go home.



The staff will tell you when to come back to the hospital. You do not have to go home if you don't want to.

Starting your labour



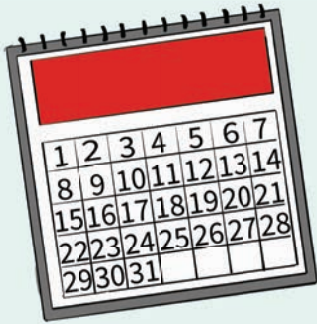
Staff will give you some more medicine. This could be tablets you swallow or medicine they put inside your vagina.

This medicine tells your body to go into labour.



Most people give birth to their babies within 1 day of having the medicine.

Waiting for labour to start by itself



Some people would rather just wait for labour to start on its own.

If you choose to wait, there are some things you should know:



- you might have to have some blood tests to make sure you are ok



- you might still have to be induced if the doctor is worried about your health



- waiting can mean your baby changes inside you. This can make it harder to find out why they died

What will happen when you are in labour



People have lots of different feelings when giving birth to their baby.

You might feel scared, upset and worried.



Some people have more pain than others. Being induced can sometimes be more painful.



Some people give birth quickly and others can take a long time.



Things that can help you when your labour starts are:

- a warm bath



- a massage



- breathing and relaxation exercises

Types of pain medicine

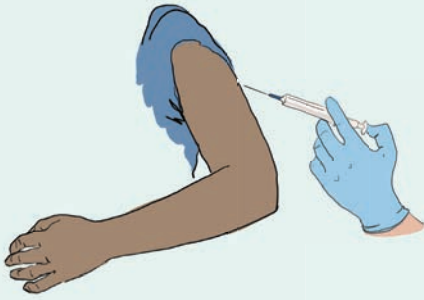


If you are in lots of pain, the staff can try different medicines to help you.

Gas and air



You breathe this air in through a long tube. It can help to dull your pain, but it won't totally go away.



Diamorphine

Diamorphine is a strong medicine that is injected into your arm or leg. It will take away a lot of the pain.



If you have diamorphine near to when your baby is born you might feel sleepy. You might not remember much about the birth.

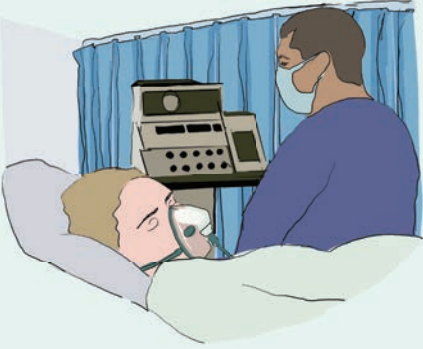


Epidural

An epidural is a strong medicine that is injected into your back.

Most of the time this will take all of your pain away.

Having a caesarean section



If you become really ill, the most important thing will be saving your life.



The safest thing will be to give you a **caesarean section**. This is an operation through your tummy to get your baby.



This can come as a shock and be really frightening for parents.

You can have somebody with you while you have the operation.

After your baby is born



When you are ready, you can start to think about what you want to do next.



You can choose to see your baby and spend time with them.



You may want to keep memories of your baby. Things like:

- hand and foot prints
- photographs
- some of your baby's hair



You may not feel able to decide straightaway. This is ok, there is no rush.



Later you may have lots of questions.
Questions about your baby and what
happened when you gave birth.



You can talk about it with your doctor
or midwife.