



Why would parents bring their baby home?

Information and resources for bereaved parents about the option to bring your stillborn or deceased baby home.

There are many different choices that parents can and do make after the death of their baby. We're not here to say that bringing your stillborn or deceased baby home is "the right" choice – it's just one choice of many choices that parents can make after their baby dies. This site was created because, even though it's legal to bring your stillborn or deceased baby home in most countries around the world, in some countries there isn't much awareness or acceptance of the choice to bring your deceased baby home.

This site was created by two Social Workers who are also bereaved parents. Through the educational pamphlets on this site, we hope to raise awareness of the choice to bring your deceased baby home as a valid option. For parents who wish to bring their deceased baby home, we aim to provide frank, relevant, clear and medically-correct information to address any fears and equip them to manage the practicalities of doing so.

Some of the reasons why parents choose to bring their stillborn or deceased baby home include:

1. Introducing your deceased baby to your family and friends.

Sometimes babies die before family and friends can meet them. Offering your family and friends an opportunity to view your deceased baby's body can be a way that they are able to "meet" your baby, and this can make it easier to continue to remember and talk about your deceased baby in your family. Many of your family and friends were eagerly anticipating your baby's arrival with you, and also feel deep grief at hearing of your baby's death. Seeing and even holding your deceased baby can give them a way to express their love for your baby, and accept your baby's death. Hospitals will often allow family and friends to come and visit you and your deceased baby at the hospital, but some people might not be able to visit before you're discharged, or may prefer to visit you and your baby in your home.

2. Having some intimate and private family time with your baby before cremation or burial.

Many hospitals will allow you to spend some family time with your deceased baby, to hold, bathe and dress your baby, and to have photos taken together as a family. This can be a very precious time for grieving families. Some families feel that they would be more comfortable and the environment would be more private and intimate if they could enjoy this family time at home instead of in the busy hospital. Hospitals may also be under pressure to discharge the family, so family time would be more limited than the time that could be spent if the parents bring their deceased baby home. Bringing your deceased baby home gives you more time and more control over when and how you spend time together as a family.

3. Being able to care for your baby's body before cremation or burial.

Many parents feel a strong desire to care for the baby that they have spent many months preparing for. To a bereaved parent, seeing, holding and caring for their deceased baby's body can feel very natural, and being able to parent and care for their deceased baby's body for a few days at home can give bereaved parents the feeling that they have been able to express their love to their child as they prepare him/ her for burial or cremation. This can feel very healing for a bereaved parent.

4. Saving on the high costs of funeral direction.

Funeral direction can be very expensive, and for some families funeral direction costs can leave them in debt after the death of their baby. Some parents prefer to avoid the high costs related to professional funeral direction while at the same time gaining the other benefits of taking care of their baby's funeral themselves.

5. Exercising choice and creativity can begin the healing.

The most important factor in all of this is the ability to exercise your own choice and creativity as a parent, rather than being excluded from decision-making and the practical matters related to your baby's death. Exercising your choices and your creativity can begin the healing, so don't let other people make all of the decisions for you or prescribe what's best for you. Only you know what's best for you, and any decision has the potential to add trauma and pain to your experience if it is forced onto you.

6. "Because I want to" is reason enough.

While there are many reasonable and rational reasons why parents might choose to bring their deceased baby home, "because I want to" is a good enough reason to do it. You are the parent. If bringing your stillborn or deceased baby home is what feels right to you, then that's all that matters.

These are some of the reasons why some parents choose to bring their stillborn or deceased babies home, but every family's situation is unique and there's no "right way" to grieve after the death of your baby. It's your choice, and what matters is that you make the choices that feel right for you and your family.



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For more answers to your questions about bringing stillborn and deceased babies home, go to <http://whenyourbabydies.com/q/>