

Burying your baby at home

Information for families wishing to bury their baby at home

- On behalf of Whittington Health, we are so sorry to hear that your baby has died and would like to offer our support at this time.
- There are many decisions to be made at this sad time, and you may be thinking about taking your baby home for burial.
- Some people wish to bury their baby in their own garden, or in some other place (in the countryside, for example) that holds a special meaning for them.
- If this is your decision, then this leaflet should give you the information you need.

Taking your baby home for burial

- Your baby can be buried at home if they were born before they were 24 weeks old and did not show any signs of life.
- With great care and respect, we will gently place your baby in a carefully prepared container for you to take home.
- This means you can hold them close in a way that feels meaningful and loving during this incredibly difficult time.

Keeping your baby and others safe if you bury them in your garden

- If you are thinking about burying your baby in your garden, you will need to make sure it is safe for both your baby and other people.

There are some difficult things you need to think about, when you choose where and how to bury your baby:

- If you plan to bury the baby, think about what might happen if you move to a new home. Some families choose to use a large plant pot instead of burying directly in the ground. This means that you can take your baby's burial site with you in future.

- Make sure you are not breaking any rules about the land. You must own the land, or have the owner's permission, to use it for a burial.
- Make sure your baby is not close to water supplies or watercourses. A watercourse is any channel where water naturally flows, like a river, stream, or creek.
- Make sure your baby is far enough from the edges of your garden so they stay on your land as they return to the earth.
- Your baby must be buried at a depth of at least 45cm (18 inches). Local wildlife may dig in the area, so it is extremely important for you to think carefully before choosing your garden as a place for burial.

Further information

For more information and guidance on burials on private land visit:

<http://www.naturaldeath.org.uk/index.php?page=home-burial>

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/cemeteries-and-burials-prevent-groundwater-pollution#human-home-burial>

Helpful contacts

Bereavement support midwives

If you need more support, please talk to our Bereavement support midwives.

Shared Phone: 07825 009 071 (Monday to Sunday 8am to 4pm)

Email: whh-tr.bereavementmidwife@nhs.net

Department of Spiritual and Pastoral Care

Phone: 020 7288 5337 (Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm).

Outside these hours, please call the chaplain on call via the switchboard number: 020 7272 3070

Labour Ward

Phone: 020 7288 5502 (24/7 access number)

Contact our Trust

If you have a compliment, complaint or concern, please contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) on **020 7288 5551** or whh-tr.PALS@nhs.net.

If you need a large print, audio or translated copy of this leaflet, please email whh-tr.patient-information@nhs.net. We will try our best to meet your needs.

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