



Maternal Mental Health | *Tip sheet*

Dealing with Pregnancy Loss and Fertility Challenges

Facing a pregnancy loss or ongoing fertility challenges can be a painful experience, especially when it seems like everyone else is having an easy time naturally expanding their families. One in four women experience a miscarriage in their lifetime, and according to the March of Dimes, it's estimated that between 10–20% of known pregnancies end in loss. For many, the ability to even get pregnant and carry a child to term remains a struggle, with over 13% of women of childbearing age in this country reporting fertility issues.

Managing the frustration of ongoing fertility challenges or the grief of losing a child in utero can have a profound impact on how a woman perceives herself. Internal perceptions of inadequacy, incompetency and guilt in relation to their partner are common. These emotions, compounded with persistent, repetitive thoughts about the inability to conceive, can take a toll on a woman's mental health and lead to heightened risk for anxiety and depression on top of the physical challenges she may face in recovery.

While feelings of sadness, frustration and hopelessness are natural, coping mechanisms are available and have been shown to be effective. If you are dealing with pregnancy loss or infertility challenges, here are some resources:

Open and Honest Communication: Talking about fertility issues with a partner and loved ones can be beneficial to reduce feelings of isolation and open doors for practical and emotional support.

Therapy: Counseling can play a crucial role in coping with infertility or a miscarriage, helping to address grief and loss, shame or guilt, or depression or anxiety related to uncertainty, treatments or repeated disappointment.

Support Groups: Sharing your experience with others facing similar struggles can be a cathartic exercise. Support groups offer a vital sense of community for individuals and couples navigating the challenges of infertility. These sessions can provide a safe space to share emotions and insights, reducing feelings of isolation and promoting emotional well-being.

[More on Next Page](#)



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Medication: Prescription medications are available on a case-by-case basis to help individuals manage the mental toll that pregnancy loss or infertility can have over time.

Alternative Roads to Motherhood: Throughout the process, it's important to recognize that the path to motherhood can take many forms, including adoption and surrogacy. In the United States, approximately 100,000 children are adopted each year through all types of mechanisms, including foster care, and private, domestic and international adoptions. Surrogacies, while more expensive, have also increased significantly over the past few decades.

If you are a Lucet member dealing with pregnancy loss or fertility challenges, our care managers are here to help through your health plan.

◆ Let's connect you to mental health care, today.

Lucet's team of behavioral health professionals are here to help you navigate your mental health journey with confidence. Whether you are looking for immediate care or do not know where to start, we will guide you through every step.

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eap.lucethealth.com