



Infertility, Miscarriage, Stillbirth, & Infant Death Definitions & Key Facts

Infertility

- A **disease** that results in the abnormal functioning of the male or female reproductive system
 - In practice, it is characterized as the inability to conceive or carry pregnancy to term after 12 months of trying (after 6 months if 35+)
- **Who is Affected?**
 - ~10% of the population is affected by infertility
 - **1 in 8** couples experience infertility
 - Infertility is experienced by people of all races, ethnicities, and socio-economic groups
- **Insurance Coverage**
 - Only **15 states** require any coverage of some level of infertility treatment
 - The Affordable Care Act does not require coverage of infertility treatment
- **What Causes Infertility?**
 - Can be due to structural issues, hormonal insufficiencies, immunologic disorders, primary gonadal failure, and repeat pregnancy loss in women (~30%), men (~30%), or both men and women (~30%)

Miscarriage

- Defined as embryonic/fetal death before 20 weeks gestation
- 15-20% of all pregnancies end in miscarriage
 - 75% before 12 weeks gestation
- **What Causes Miscarriage?** Chromosomal anomalies, immunologic issues, hormonal issues, and structural problems
- **Resolution**
 - Can occur without medical intervention
 - Can involve medicine to assist the uterus in expelling the embryo/fetus
 - Can involve a surgical procedure called a “Dilation and Curettage” or “D&C” to remove the contents of the uterus

Stillbirth

- Defined as fetal death at 20 weeks gestation or beyond
- Occurs in about 1 in 160 pregnancies
 - African-American women have a 2-fold increased risk of stillbirth compared to white women
- **What Causes Stillbirth?** Birth defects; placental problems; infections of mother, fetus, or placenta; chronic health conditions in the pregnant woman; umbilical cord accidents
- **Resolution**
 - Labor generally starts within 2 weeks of fetal death; some women need to deliver immediately for their own safety

Infertility. Miscarriage. Infant Loss. Spiritual Resources.

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Infertility, Miscarriage, Stillbirth, & Infant Death Definitions & Key Facts, cont.

Infant Death

- Defined as the death of a child up to age 1
 - 2/3^{rds} of child deaths in NC are of infants
 - African American infants in NC are 2.5 times more likely to die than white infants
 - Disparity gets worse as education levels rise – the infants of college-educated African American women are 3 times more likely to die than the infants of college-educated white women
- **What Causes Infant Death?** Conditions of prematurity (44%), birth defects (20%), and other causes such as SIDS (3%) and unintentional injuries (4%)

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