

Re: celiac disease and miscarriages:

So that we better understand the issue of grief and profound sense of loss in couples who have lost an unborn child due to miscarriage (and the urgent importance of identifying those women with undetected CD):

Friday, 8 December, 2000, 02:26 GMT

Doctors 'unaware' of miscarriage grief

Miscarriage can be a devastating experience

The grief and trauma experienced by couples after a miscarriage is severely underestimated by health professionals, says a study. A team of psychologists assessed the level of grief felt by both women following a miscarriage, and their partners.

Miscarriage can no longer be regarded as a minor matter by either health professionals or the lay community

Australian study report

And, finding both deeply affected by what had happened, they accused the medical profession of treating it too lightly. Only one-third of the women and even fewer of their partners were asked by health professionals how they were coping with the miscarriage.

Women in particular described feelings of loss up to four months after the miscarriage.

The report, published in the British Journal of Medical Psychology, said: "Miscarriage can no longer be regarded as a minor matter by either health professionals or the lay community. "Although there is no indication in the present sample that relationships suffered as a result of the miscarriage, findings indicate that there is a need for health professionals to legitimize the grief of both women and partners and where appropriate offering counseling or referral."

It adds: "After a miscarriage the father's feelings are rarely given consideration because of the assumption they do not bond with the unborn child."

A miscarriage is defined as a pregnancy which ends spontaneously before the unborn child is sufficiently developed to survive outside the womb. At the moment, babies can in theory survive if born approximately at or beyond the 24th week of pregnancy.

A quarter recover quickly

Some women questioned also felt partly or even wholly responsible for the miscarriage, telling the researchers that they had been working too hard, smoking, drinking or holidaying during the early months of the pregnancy.

A third of partners said they still thought about the event daily, even some time after the miscarriage had taken place. Dr Pat Hughes, a senior lecturer in psychiatry, and consultant psychotherapist from St George's Hospital in south London is conducting research into the psychological effects of stillbirth on both women and their partners. She said: "There is no question that the later the loss is in pregnancy, the bigger the impact.

"The exception might be people who have had multiple early pregnancy loss."

She said that the response to miscarriage depended on the person involved, with as many as 25% of women and men coping with the event quickly.

"We know that parents who have suffered a miscarriage like counseling, but we need more evidence that counseling actually makes a difference to the outcome."

Studies in other countries have found that an advice booklet given to couples who have suffered pregnancy loss, telling them what feelings to expect, was considered very helpful by patients. Another study

suggested that a follow-up phone call from a health professional asking how the couple were coping was also much appreciated.

See also:

Internet links:

British Psychological Society

Miscarriage Q&A

Miscarriage Association

Ron, as you know, a substantial percentage of these women, especially those with recurring miscarriages and/or problem pregnancies, have undetected celiac disease. With the elimination of gluten most all of these unfortunate women are able to conceive quickly and go full-term. What a marvelous opportunity we have to make a difference!

All for now