



Wisconsin Stillbirth Service Program
Marshfield Clinic Medical Genetics 3C1
1000 North Oak Avenue
Marshfield, WI 54449
1-877-216-8535

To Parents who have experienced a stillbirth:

We express our deepest sympathy to you at this difficult time. While it may be hard for you, someone will be talking with you about the possibility of postmortem examination [autopsy] and other studies of your stillborn baby. They will explain the consent forms you need to sign for the studies that will be used as information to help answer two questions that many families ask after a stillbirth: Why did it happen? Will it happen again?

Those of us involved with the Wisconsin Stillbirth Service Program are available to provide consultation to you and your family members. The information gathered with your consent will be reviewed and interpreted and a summary letter will be sent to your physician [usually within about three months]. In addition, you may wish to contact us directly regarding genetic counseling services.

Follow-up studies through our program have shown that most parents find that the evaluations and subsequent counseling are helpful to them in resolving issues surrounding the birth of a stillborn baby; no one has expressed regret to us for having had the suggested evaluations done.

While the major reason we collect this information is to provide answers to you and your physician, we also hope that, collectively, information about stillbirths obtained in this way will allow us to answer certain specific research questions concerning the causes of stillbirth, and eventually help in prevention. The information from all of the infants referred to the Wisconsin Stillbirth Service Program is saved in a database located at the Marshfield Clinic. This is the same information that is used clinically to answer your questions about why this happened to your baby. No extra samples are collected and no extra tests are run, but it is our hope that when this information is saved and reviewed as our knowledge changes, the combined information from many families can help answer questions about stillbirth in general. All information obtained from these studies or from you and your family members will be afforded in the same confidentiality as all medical records obtained by our clinic and will only be used by medical professionals working with WISSP. Your name or other identifying information will not be used in any publications that might result from this work. One possible exception is that if we feel that photographs of your stillborn child would be valuable in teaching other doctors about the causes of stillbirth we would like to be able to use them in medical lectures or publications. If you have concerns about this potential research, or wish to have your medical information or your child's information or photographs withdrawn, you can contact the WISSP director at any time.

Whatever your immediate decision concerning postmortem evaluations of your stillborn baby, we hope that we may be of service to you in the future.

*Sincerely,
Elizabeth McPherson, M.D.
Director, Wisconsin Stillbirth Service Program*