

| Do | Don't |
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| Do be willing to accept help from others when you feel 'weak'. | Don't take on board society's expectation that you must be the strong one. |
| Do cry when you need to laugh when you can. | Don't keep a stiff upper lip. |
| Do understand that others in your family will express their pain and grief in different ways. This does not mean that they loved your child any more or any less. | Don't expect to grieve in the same way as others. We're all different and we grieve in different ways. |
| Do be realistic. Give yourself time and space to grieve, especially if you return to work soon after the funeral. | Don't throw yourself into work or 'projects' in an attempt to forget your child's death. |
| Do talk to your partner about the pressures you face at work, e.g. colleagues not understanding. Let her know that you are hurting deeply but don't always know how to express it. | Don't expect your sexual relationship with your partner to resume quickly. It might, but recognise that both of you may have different needs and perspectives. |
| Do allow your partner and other family members space to talk without interruption. | Don't shut yourself off from your partner and other close family members. |
| Do talk with others about the different ways men and women grieve. Allow others to express their grief and find help in different ways to you. | Don't be so preoccupied with supporting your partner and family that you don't grieve for yourself. |
| Do realise that feeling angry is a normal response to pain. One way to release anger is through vigorous sport or other physical activity, e.g. gardening. At the same time, though, learn to simply do nothing for ten minutes except to sit and be aware of your own breath. | Don't allow anger and resentment – towards the hospital, doctor, driver, police, God or anyone else – to smoulder inside you. Recognise that you may be feeling angry with yourself because you couldn't protect your family. |
| Do write your feelings down. Over time, you will be able to see progress as you go through the feelings of anger, resentment, regret and deep sorrow. | Don't blame yourself for what you could not change, or for what you might have been able to change. It won't help! |
| Do ask to talk on the phone to another dad from <i>Bereaved Parent Support</i> . | Don't expect your life to ever be the same again. Accept that you and your family are on a journey towards finding a 'new normal'. |
| Do expect that, over time, as you work through your grief and pain – both on your own and with others – memories of your child will become a source of comfort, joy and strength for the future. | Don't expect to 'get over' your child's death. Your child will never be forgotten or replaced, but will always be a special part of your life. |
| Do tell others what you need. Sometimes you may want to be talk and be listened to, at other times you may rather be on your own. | Don't be afraid to let people know when they are not being helpful. Be gentle, if you can! |
| Do be aware that when you are in a vulnerable emotional state you are highly susceptible to your weaknesses. | Don't be tempted to ignore the danger of alcohol or substance misuse – it can feel like an easy way of numbing the pain. |
| Do make sure that you enjoy things (when you are able to) without feeling guilty. For example, allow yourself to enjoy 30 minutes with a TV comedy programme – it does you good! | Don't think you will never again enjoy something that you previously did with your child (e.g. going to a football match). It is possible, but it will be different. |
| Do be kind to yourself and look after yourself. | Don't feel guilty when, some days, you feel OK. |