



Advice To Parents Of Cherubs In Heaven

*CHERUBS – The Association of Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia Research, Advocacy and Support
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- “Do not allow anyone to rush you. Take as much time as one needs to say good byes. I spent about 45 minutes with Ryan before they let us take him to pathology, which is against hospital rules, but we broke the rule. I regret that I didn't hold him more. Also, this sounded weird to me, but the nurse told me about it the day before Ryan died. She told me we'd unhook all the tubes and wires, bathe him, put baby lotion all over, comb his hair (cut a lock of it too!) dress him, wrap him in a blanket and hold him. Take pictures and say our good-byes and explain why God was taking him from us. That part I couldn't figure out to explain--still can't! I kept all the stuff the hospital used on Ryan--scissors, pacifiers, diapers, his toys, clothes, the sign on his bed. For 29 days, he collected quite a bit of stuff. It's all in an air tight box and known as Ryan's box.” Cindy Mohr
- “Continue pumping until after the funeral- hugs can be very painful when you're engorged”. Rhonda Montague
- “A homopathic remedy to dry up breastmilk is to put cold cabbage leaves in your bra and change as they become wilted (strange I know, but it helped, after I quit being stubborn and tried it.) If your cherub passed at birth, or shortly after, your milk will probably come in the day of the funeral. This was the worst day of my life, as I was in so much physical pain, and so numb emotionally. I would even go so far, as to print in the funeral bulletin, “We know how much you want to hug us, but please refrain from hugging the recently delivered mother”, or something like that”. Amy Rademaker
- I am making a "shadow -box" with Thomas' Mementos. His little hat and socks and bracelets and some cards, ect. are put into a special "frame" which I will hang on a special wall. This way I can Look at Thomas' memories everyday without opening a box, and it is such a nice decor too. I also had one made for my older son Michael, and he enjoys to look at it too.” Gabi Frietag
- In our case, it wasn't a sudden at-birth death, but after 3 weeks of intensive care. I would suggest having as many visitors as possible--the more people who actually meet your baby before they leave, the better. Makes them more real, helps affirm they were really here! We celebrated his life with a full on funeral, reception back at our house, etc. These events were important, for us and well as friends and family. Many told me it gave them a chance to really focus on what had happened. It has been good for me to gather everything about Fletcher's short life together. I made an album of sorts and have a huge box for all the cards that came in. Now it's all together to take out and "visit" when I'm in the mood. There are many books on infant loss. I related to some of the material, and not to a lot of it. Same with other infant loss sites/boards on the Web. Something for everyone, I suppose. It was helpful to look around and check everything out. It has helped me to reach out to others who have suffered a similar loss. I'm in a support group with wonderful women who all had late or during labor still births. Mine was the only one "here" for awhile, but it hasn't really made a difference in the way we have connected. But truly, the 2 women I met through Cherubs have been the best relationships of all. We give each other strength and support regularly.” Laurie Stusser-McNeil
- “Hold your precious baby and tell them everything you want them to know, without holding back. Let them know how much you love them and will miss them forever. Take pictures, so you have them. You may want to see them later. Give them a bath, dress them and then have all families members close to you say goodbye. It is important for everyone to say goodbye. This will always be a cherished, yet painful memory that you will reflect on”. Brenda Slavin
- “Take as many pictures and mementos and possible. Make sure that siblings are involved, or that you record things so that future siblings can see what you experienced.” Amy Rademaker