

Talking to Children about an Uncertain Fetal Prognosis:

Suggestions for approaching these conversations

1. Use **simple, honest** language siblings can relate to. Some examples include...
 - The doctors take pictures to look at different parts of the baby's body as she/he grows
 - Sometimes they find problems that can be fixed with medicine or going to the hospital
 - Sometimes all the medicine or time in the hospital will not help the baby's body to work
 - We don't know why some babies' bodies don't grow like they should
 - It's nobody's fault (mom didn't do anything wrong, you can't cause this by thinking bad thoughts)
2. If doctors can't fix the problems with medicine or time in the hospital, the baby will not be able to grow up like you
3. We don't always know how long the baby will be able to live outside of mom's body with a body that doesn't work
4. We will make sure that no matter what, the baby doesn't hurt or feel pain
5. Even if the baby can't come home with us, would you want to see the baby in the hospital?
6. It's okay to be upset about this news. Our whole family is very sad about this news but we will get through this together.
7. No matter what happens, you will still be a brother/sister. We can make a plan to make sure you always remember your baby brother/sister.
8. We can work together to find ways to get your feelings out. We are here if you want to talk. But it's also okay if you just want to play and laugh and do your normal activities. There's nothing wrong with still having fun.
9. You do not need to worry about your own body. You can't catch these problems. Your doctor has looked at your body many times since you were born and you don't have the same problems.

If you have questions or concerns about how to speak to your children, please reach out to your Child Life Specialist for additional support and ideas.



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