

## IUFD\*/Stillbirth – Facts You Need to Know

*\*Intrauterine Fetal Death or Demise*

### What is an IUFD?

- IUFD is the term doctors use when a baby dies in the uterus. It is typically applied to babies who are at or after 20 weeks' gestation. A more common term for IUFD is "stillbirth."
- Each year there are about 24,000 IUFDs in the United States.
- A stillborn baby may receive a birth and death certificate.
- A fetus who dies in utero before the 20th week of gestation are considered a "miscarriage" and are treated differently by hospitals and medical examiners.

### What factors may contribute to a stillbirth or IUFD?

- **Excessive Bleeding** which can occur when the placenta prematurely separates from the uterus
- **Placental abnormalities** preventing the baby from receiving adequate blood or oxygen flow or adequate nutrition
- **Umbilical Cord issues** such as being wrapped around the baby's neck in utero preventing the baby from receiving oxygen
- **Genetic defects** such as chromosomal abnormalities impacting the development of the baby's vital organs like the brain and heart
- **Underlying health conditions** of the pregnant person such as diabetes, hypertension, autoimmune disorders, and infections can increase the risk of stillbirth
- **A pregnancy involving multiples** increases the risk of stillbirth
- **African American women** are twice as likely to have a stillbirth as white women

### What can the carrier do to minimize the risk of stillbirth or IUFD?

- **Stay healthy** which includes no smoking, drugs, or alcoholic beverages during pregnancy
- **Undergo comprehensive prenatal care** which includes screening for any conditions that may interfere with healthy fetal development
- **Seek prompt medical attention** if there is any significant change in the pregnancy