

Photography Tips for Perinatal Loss

| |
|---|
| Obtain permission to take photos- note some cultures do not allow photographs to be taken |
| Use natural lighting – turn off flash |
| Provide black and white or sepia copies of the photos along with the color versions |
| Position the baby in a normal, healthy baby position (hands near face, knees bent) |
| Place on blankets/ pillows for soft surface |
| Hold up or prop blanket for backdrop |
| Take a few pictures of each pose |

| Picture Memento Ideas | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Prior to birth | In the arms of family members |
| Parents holding/ kissing | Family portraits |
| Weight/ measurements | Pose with wedding rings |
| Bath | Pose with items of significance |
| Rituals- reading, rocking, singing | Close ups of hands or feet in parent's hands |
| Close-ups of hands, feet, ears, mouth | In special outfit/ blankets |

Water Immersion Photography

- The following steps are recommended when planning for water immersion photography:
1. Talk to the family about the possibility of water immersion, obtain consent.
 2. Obtain a basin of tepid tap water large enough to immerse the baby or simply the hands and feet. Macro lens option is best for close-up photography.
 3. Wait for the water to clear if the tap water is aerated.
 4. Take pictures of the baby with the family and in any special clothing first, then proceed to water immersion photography.
 5. A gloved assistant to support and position the baby during the photo session may be helpful.
 6. With gloved hands, gently place the unclothed baby in the water. Small bubbles of air may cling to the surface of the baby's skin or the container; lightly run your hand over any surfaces where bubbles remain. Gently remove any dried blood on the baby that remains.
 7. Do not submerge the camera. The composition of the picture and choice of lens will determine how close to the water the camera needs positioned. Experiment with different camera angles to reduce reflection from the surface of the water. This may require getting fairly close to the surface of the water.
 8. Consider how to frame the pictures. Capture specific parts of the baby like the hands or feet. If the face or head was difficult to photograph outside of the water, note the buoyancy of the water tends to minimize the folding of facial skin or collapsing of the head.
 9. Position the baby in a way that appears natural. Flex the knees and bend the arms, position the hands near the face.
 10. Lift the baby from the water following your photo session and place on a towel to gently blot dry.

Adapted from Duffey H. (2014). Water immersion in neonatal bereavement photography. *Nursing for women's health*, 18(5), 429–433. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1751-486X.12152>