

Early pregnancy loss among Australian women



Background

Early pregnancy loss can have profound impacts on women, partners and families, including experiences of grief, loss and isolation.^{1,2,3} Understanding the impact of early pregnancy loss, including how common it is, is vital for informing the design and implementation of services to support women, partners and families through their loss.⁴

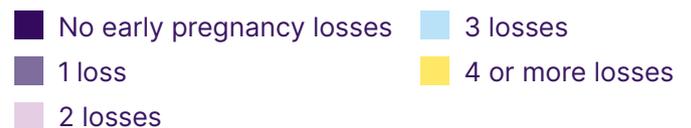
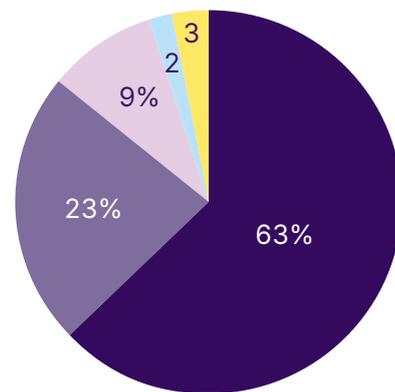
However, Australia lacks the up-to-date population-level data needed to understand how common early pregnancy loss might be. To help address this gap, we used the 2025 National Women's Health Survey to estimate the prevalence of early pregnancy loss. Early pregnancy loss was defined, as per the Australian definition, as the loss of a pregnancy before 20 weeks (about 5 months) of gestation.⁵



Australia lacks the up-to-date population-level data needed to **understand** how common early pregnancy loss might be.

Experience of early pregnancy loss

We asked women who had ever been pregnant if they had experienced an early pregnancy loss, and if so, how many they had experienced.



A significant proportion of women reported experiencing early pregnancy loss. Close to 4 in 10 (37%) women who had ever been pregnant said they had experienced at least one early pregnancy loss.* This includes:

- around 2 in 10 (23%) who had experienced one loss
- just over 1 in 10 (14%) who had experienced multiple losses.

* Individual women could have had multiple pregnancies, so these results show the proportion of women who have experienced early pregnancy loss, not the proportion of pregnancies that resulted in loss.



Many women report not receiving **adequate information** or referral to support services following a loss.

So what?

- Almost 4 in 10 Australian women who have ever been pregnant have experienced at least one early pregnancy loss.
- Our results are in line with previous Australian estimates,⁶ demonstrating that early pregnancy loss continues to be a significant public health issue.
- Given how common it is for women to have experienced early pregnancy loss, and the profound impact that such losses can have, it is critically important that women receive high-quality information, care and support following a loss. Yet, many women report not receiving adequate information or referral to support services following a loss.⁷
- Government initiatives to improve data, education and services related to early pregnancy loss are an important step towards reducing the impact of early pregnancy loss on women, families and communities.⁴



References

- 1 Bellhouse C, Temple-Smith M, Watson S, Bilardi J. "The loss was traumatic... some healthcare providers added to that": Women's experiences of miscarriage. *Women Birth*. 2019;32(2):137-146. doi:10.1016/j.wombi.2018.06.006
- 2 Bellhouse C, Temple-Smith MJ, Bilardi JE. "It's just one of those things people don't seem to talk about..." women's experiences of social support following miscarriage: a qualitative study. *BMC Womens Health*. 2018;18(1):176. doi:10.1186/s12905-018-0672-3
- 3 Miller EJ, Temple-Smith MJ, Bilardi JE. 'There was just no-one there to acknowledge that it happened to me as well': A qualitative study of male partner's experience of miscarriage. Zweigenthal V, ed. *PLOS ONE*. 2019;14(5):e0217395. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0217395
- 4 Australian Government Department of Health Disability and Ageing. Breaking the silence on miscarriage. May 17, 2024. Accessed August 29, 2025. <https://www.health.gov.au/ministers/the-hon-ged-kearney-mp/media/breaking-the-silence-on-miscarriage>
- 5 Suker A, Li Y, Robson D, Marren A, the Australasian CREI (Certificate of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility) Consensus Expert Panel on Trial Evidence (ACCEPT) group. Australasian Recurrent Pregnancy Loss Clinical Management Guideline 2024 Part I. *Aust N Z J Obstet Gynaecol*. 2024;64(5):432-444. doi:10.1111/ajo.13821
- 6 Hure AJ, Powers JR, Mishra GD, Herbert DL, Byles JE, Loxton D. Miscarriage, Preterm Delivery, and Stillbirth: Large Variations in Rates within a Cohort of Australian Women. Frasn MG, ed. *PLoS ONE*. 2012;7(5):e37109. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0037109
- 7 Bilardi JE, Sharp G, Payne S, Temple-Smith MJ. The need for improved emotional support: A pilot online survey of Australian women's access to healthcare services and support at the time of miscarriage. *Women Birth*. 2021;34(4):362-369. doi:10.1016/j.wombi.2020.06.011

About this short report

This short report includes data from the 2025 National Women's Health Survey (NWHS).

The Jean Hailes National Women's Health Survey (NWHS) is an annual survey designed to help us better understand the issues that affect women in Australia, their attitudes and behaviours and the health information and policy changes that will help improve their health and wellbeing.

The 2025 NWHS explored women's experiences, attitudes and knowledge in relation to early pregnancy loss. It was conducted online in mid-2025 with a national sample, but only in English.

A total of 3,629 women aged 18 and over residing in Australia participated in the survey. This report focuses on the 1,616 women who had ever been pregnant.

The 2025 NWHS was conducted in partnership with the Early Pregnancy Loss Coalition and Pink Elephants with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

This short report was authored by Jean Hailes staff in collaboration with Isabelle Oderberg, Samantha Payne, Assoc Prof. Jade Bilardi, and Assoc Prof. Fran Boyle.

For more information about the NWHS, see the technical report on our [website](#).