



## Helping a Friend Who Is Dealing with Infertility

Maybe you're not dealing with infertility, but if your friend or relative is, it's likely that it's affecting you, too.

For instance, if you have a best girlfriend who has been trying to get pregnant for a while, you might start to question whether you should bring up a mutual acquaintance's pregnancy announcement. Will it make your best friend feel upset? Will she become stressed out? Will she resent you for being the bearer of such news?

Truly, how to help a friend who is dealing with infertility can be a very tough and complicated subject. Many people coping with infertility simply don't want to discuss their problems, especially if they are naturally private individuals. Then there are others who are completely open about their experiences, right down to incredibly intimate (sometimes even graphic) details.

So what can you do if you want to show your support for a person or couple dealing with infertility but don't want to step on any toes?

Try this trio of techniques:

1. Be available, but don't be pushy. If your friend doesn't want to discuss the topic of infertility, let it go. On the other hand, if your friend really wants to discuss it, allow her to vent a bit. Don't judge, don't react, just listen and respond.
2. Don't constantly ask your friend about doctor's appointments, outcomes, etc. if your friend seems hesitant to talk about the subject.
3. Out of respect, ask your friend if he or she wants to have a conversation about his or her infertility. If the answer is "no", don't try to change his or her response. Even if you're aching to hear all the "news", if it's not your business, it's not your business.

Remember that there are definitely ways to be a good friend to someone who is struggling with infertility. And perhaps the best is to continuously focus on what that person needs and wants, not on what you think you ought to be doing to help.