



## Remember...

Perinatal depression and anxiety are common health conditions that need to be treated.

*With the right help, she can feel better.*

***YOU*** can help her to get the care she needs.



## Who to Call for Help

Keep the phone numbers of her doctor, nurse or midwife on hand.

Postpartum Support International  
1-800-944-4773 or Text: 503-894-9453  
For support and local resources

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline  
1-800-273-TALK (8255)  
To talk to a crisis counselor 24/7 about *any* mental health issue



## For More Information

Moms' Mental Health Matters  
<https://www1.nichd.nih.gov/ncmhhep>

Postpartum Support International  
<https://www.postpartum.net>  
Has resources for both moms and dads

MotherToBaby  
<https://mothertobaby.org>  
*Experts on Medicines & More During Pregnancy & Breastfeeding*

This brochure is supported by the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) under grant number UF5MC26845 entitled Supporting Healthy Start Performance Project as part of an award totaling \$2,472,000 with 0 percent financed with non-governmental sources. This information or content and conclusions are those of the author and should not be construed as the official position or policy of, nor should any endorsements be inferred by HRSA, HHS or the U.S. Government.

# Depression and Anxiety During and After Pregnancy

What fathers, partners, families and friends should know



## What is Perinatal Depression?

Perinatal depression is a condition that many pregnant women and new mothers struggle with. A woman with this condition may feel very sad or very anxious. Perinatal depression can make it hard for a woman to take care of herself or her baby.

### It can happen to any mother.

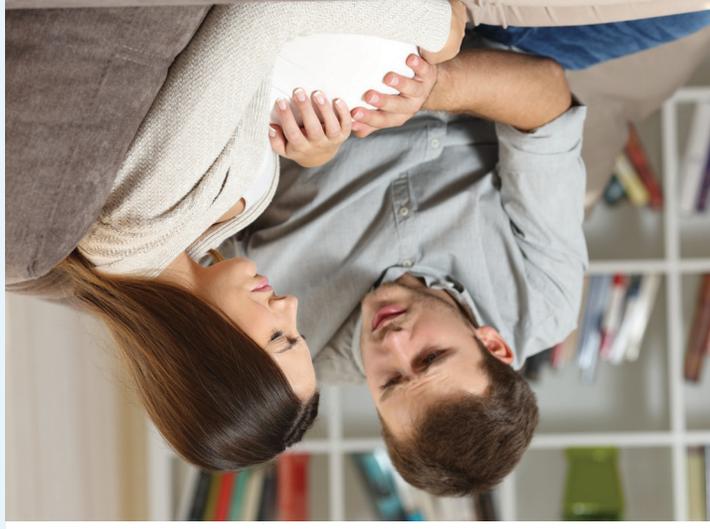
1 in 7 women will experience perinatal depression. It can happen during pregnancy or up to a year after the baby's birth. It can affect women of any age, race, ethnicity, culture, income or education.

### It's a serious condition but there are treatments that work.

With help, women with perinatal depression or anxiety can get better. Getting help can make all the difference for the woman, the baby and the family.

### Effective treatments include:

- Counseling
- Medicine
- Social support, including support groups



## Signs and Symptoms

Family members or friends may be the first to recognize a problem with depression or anxiety when a woman is pregnant or has just had a baby. Keep an eye out for these signs. **Does she...**

- Seem to feel sad, hopeless or stressed most of the time
  - Have little interest in things she used to enjoy
  - Seem to have trouble focusing and coping with daily tasks
  - Seem very anxious, nervous or irritable
  - Worry constantly about the baby OR show little interest in the baby
- Are you worried that...**
- She doesn't seem able to take care of herself or the baby
  - She might hurt herself or the baby

### It's more than the "baby blues"

Many women feel tearful and exhausted when they bring their new baby home. But if symptoms last for more than 2 weeks, she may have perinatal depression or anxiety.

## How You Can Help

*If a woman you know shows signs of perinatal depression or anxiety, here's what you can do.*

**Encourage her to get help.** Have her call her doctor, nurse or midwife. Help her to make the call if she needs it.

**Listen to her.** Let her talk about her feelings and offer support.

Allow her to focus on her own needs. Give her time to see friends or exercise and have some time to herself.

**Help out around the house.** Help with baby care and household chores.

**Take time for yourself.** A mother's depression can be hard on the whole family, so remember to take care of yourself, too.

**If you're worried about her safety or the baby's safety, this is a medical emergency. Call 911 or take her to the nearest emergency room.**

**Did you know?**

Fathers can suffer from depression, too, before or after the baby is born. This happens to 1 in 10 fathers. Fathers should seek help, too.