

## Postpartum Depression and Anxiety

Postpartum depression, which can last months or years after giving birth, can affect a birthing person's or caregiver's ability to bond with and care for their baby.

If left untreated, it can impact the birthing person's or caregiver's health and may cause sleeping, eating, and behavioral problems for the baby.

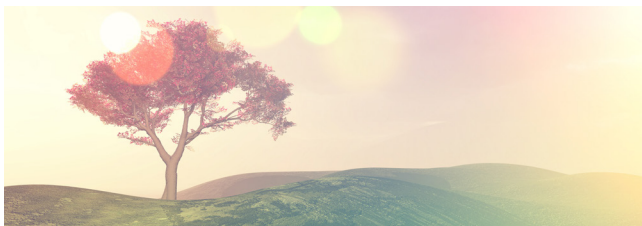
When postpartum depression is effectively treated and managed, it benefits the birthing person or caregiver and child's health.

For your baby to feel safe and secure, it is important that you take care of your own needs.

### Signs and Symptoms Can Include But Are Not Limited To:

- Persistent sad, anxious, irritable, or "empty" mood
- Feeling guilty, worthless, hopeless, or helpless
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Difficulty sleeping
- Trouble bonding or forming an emotional attachment with the baby
- Persistent doubts about the ability to care for the baby
- Thoughts about death, suicide, or harming oneself or the baby

Depression and anxiety can present differently from person to person. Please contact your healthcare team if you or your loved ones are exhibiting concerning behavior.



## Contact for Help

### Emergency Hotlines

- For immediate help: **Call 911**
- **988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline:** Call 988 (formerly the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline) or 1-800-TALK (8255)
- **National Maternal Mental Health Hotline:** Call or text 1-833-TLC-MAMA (1-833-852-6262)

### Non-Emergency Helplines

- **Mother-Baby Hopeline at Hennepin Healthcare:** (612) 873-HOPE or (612) 873-4673 - the Hopeline is **not** a crisis phone line. A mental health professional will call you back within two business days.
- **Pregnancy & Postpartum Support Minnesota:** Call or text 1-800-944-4773, text en Español: 971-203-7773. Support and information provided by peer volunteers 7 days a week.



Minnesota Department of Health  
Maternal & Child Health Section  
PO Box 64975  
St. Paul, MN 55164-0975  
651-201-3650  
[health.mch@state.mn.us](mailto:health.mch@state.mn.us)  
[www.health.state.mn.us](http://www.health.state.mn.us)



To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-3650

## Depression or Anxiety During and After Pregnancy

*When Being Pregnant or Having a New Baby Is Not What You Expected*





## Causes of Depression and Anxiety

There is no single known cause. Parents with a history of depression or anxiety are more likely to struggle during and after pregnancy. Other factors that can increase your risk of experiencing depression and anxiety include:

- Stress (finances, living situation, health)
- Hormonal changes
- Trauma
- Lack of support and social connection
- Baby who is fussy, colicky, or has health challenges

## Treatment

The most effective treatment for depression and anxiety can include:

- Therapy or support groups
- Medicine that can be used during pregnancy or lactation (talk with your healthcare provider)
- Social support - family, friends, faith community, parent groups, neighbors
- Public health and home visiting nurses

## When Is It An Emergency?

If you feel like hurting yourself or if your loved one speaks of hurting themselves, please contact one of the resources on the back middle panel.

In very rare cases, birthing persons can experience very serious symptoms of psychosis after having a baby. This is a medical emergency and birthing persons should be taken immediately to the Emergency Department at the nearest hospital and should not be left alone with their baby.

### Symptoms may include:

- Hearing or seeing things that are not there (often paranoid - being watched or feeling unsafe)
- Being unable to sleep, even when the baby is sleeping
- Speaking or moving at a faster than usual pace.
- Confusion or disorientation
- A personal or family history of psychosis or bipolar disorder

## Additional Resources

- [CDC Hear Her Campaign \(www.cdc.gov/hearher/index.html\)](http://www.cdc.gov/hearher/index.html): provides life-saving messages about urgent warning signs to prevent pregnancy-related deaths
- [Minnesota Help Me Connect \(helpmeconnect.web.health.state.mn.us/HelpMeConnect/\)](http://web.health.state.mn.us/HelpMeConnect/): helps expectant families, families with young children find and connect to services in their local communities that support healthy child development and well-being
- [Family Home Visiting Program \(www.health.state.mn.us/fhv\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/fhv): home-based service that provides social, emotional, health-related and parenting support and information for families

## Things We Can Do

Talk with your healthcare provider or ask a loved one to help you ask for recommendations and get the care you need.

- Talk to a mental health therapist or join a support or parent group.
- Ask your care provider about medicines that can be safely used during pregnancy or while breast/chest feeding.
- Seek out people in your community or faith groups about other support they recommend.
- Ask friends and family for help with child care, chores, errands, or to stop by with a meal.
- Think of small changes you can make to eat healthy, drink enough water, move your body and get rest or sleep.

It may take a combination of the activities above to get the help you need. Be patient with yourself!

## Stories From Other Parents

*"I love children and couldn't wait to have my own. Then my husband went back to work. I started having thoughts about hurting my baby. No matter what I did, I couldn't stop the thoughts. I lived in fear but kept it a secret." – Isabel*

*"It has been two months since I saw my doctor, and I feel like a different person. The medicine has helped and my family has been very supportive. I have energy again. I love being a mother." – Malia*

*This brochure meets the requirements of Minnesota Statute 145.906. For more information, call the Minnesota Department of Health at 651-201-3650 or visit our website at: <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/mch/>*