

Information for partners and family members

It can be hard to live with or watch someone you care about experiencing perinatal depression. It is important not to blame her for how she is feeling, but to offer reassurance that these feelings are common and that she will get better (Mind, 2016).

How can you Help?

- Offer to spend time with her or to give her space
- Educate yourself on perinatal depression to gain greater understanding of her experience
- Help with household tasks
- Offer to babysit
- Listen to her
- Don't judge
- Support her to get help

(Mind, 2016)

Useful contacts

Elefriends

elefriends.org.uk

Online community for anyone experiencing mental health issues.

The Association for Postnatal illness

Helpline: 020 7386 0868

Offering support for mums with postnatal depression

Tommy's

tommys.org

Support and advice on pregnancy and mental health.

MIND

Helpline: 0845 766 0163

National association for mental health

Www.mind.org.uk

PANDAS: Pre and Postnatal Depression Advice and Support

Helpline: 0843 28 98 401

Advice and support for mental health during or after pregnancy

Mumsnet

Mumsnet.com

Online chat forum about parenting and mental health

NCT

Helpline: 0300 330 0700

Offering emotional support in pregnancy, birth and early childhood.

This leaflet is also available in Welsh and other languages if required.

How are *YOU* feeling?



These could be signs of Perinatal Depression !



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What is perinatal depression?

Perinatal means 'around birth' Perinatal Depression is depression that happens any time during pregnancy known as Antenatal Depression, childbirth or up to a year after childbirth known as Postnatal Depression (Mind, 2016).

What Causes perinatal depression?

There is no definitive answer to this although it could be a combination of risk factors that contribute such as previous mental health issues, biological causes, lack of support, low self esteem, previous abuse or major life events such as the break up of a relationship or the death of a loved one (Mind, 2016), whilst depression can happen at any time, it is known that women are more likely to experience this during the perinatal period (Biaggi *et al.*, 2016).

What is the difference between baby blues and postnatal depression

'Baby Blues' is a period of feeling tearful and emotional which occurs shortly after giving birth and usually only lasts a few days (NHS, 2018). Baby Blues is a completely normal feeling thought to be caused by a change in hormones. (NHS, 2018) . Post natal Depression is not normal. It usually develops within six weeks of giving birth and is a deeper, more long term depression which affects around 10-15% of women (Mind, 2016, Nice, 2013).

Signs and symptoms

- Feeling sad or low
- Tearful
- Tired
- Inability to cope
- Not bonding with baby
- Resenting family members
- Angry
- Thoughts of harming yourself or suicide
- Difficulty sleeping
- Feelings of guilt or hopelessness (NHS, 2018)

It's OK
not to be
OK!



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Perinatal depression is common and One in Five women are affected by it (Mind, 2016).

Tips to improve your mental wellbeing in pregnancy

Talk—being a mum can be lonely, and your emotional wellbeing can be easily overlooked. Meeting up with friends, attending antenatal classes and meeting new expectant mums or even online chat forums can all be beneficial.

Exercise—releases endorphins and can help you feel good and sleep better.

Treat yourself—lunch out or maybe a manicure? Give yourself something to look forward to away from all thoughts of pregnancy

Ask for help—Don't wear yourself out. If you are struggling emotionally or physically -get extra support. (Tommy's, 2019).

There is help and support available

Speak to your midwife, doctor or health visitor about how you are feeling. They will be able to make an assessment and you will be able to discuss the best treatment or referral options based on your individual needs. (PANDAS, 2016).

Treatments

Talking treatments - involve speaking with professionals about your thoughts, behaviour and feelings .They can help you to understand yourself better and find ways to solve your difficult emotions or suggest ways to live with them..

Medication— such as antidepressants can help to lift your mood and enable you to enjoy the things you normally would.

A combination of both— many people find that a combination of both talking treatments and medication are helpful. (Mind, 2016)