

Postpartum Depression & Anxiety

A look at postpartum depression and anxiety in mothers and fathers



Having a baby brings lots of emotions which can first appear during pregnancy. Know the signs of depression and anxiety, and be ready to take action. The first few weeks after birth are sometimes accompanied by a change in mood and adjusting to life with a new baby. While these feelings may go away on their own in a couple weeks, some parents need extra support. In the U.S., up to 1 in 5 mothers and up to 1 in 10 fathers experience postpartum anxiety and/or postpartum depression. Although this is often discussed after a baby is born, depression and anxiety can start during pregnancy. Below are some tools and information to better understand signs and symptoms of postpartum depression and where to get help.



Postpartum Depression, Anxiety and Other Mood Disorders

- Postpartum depression (PPD) and postpartum anxiety (PPA) are medical conditions driven by hormones, fatigue and adjusting to a new baby that occur up to a year after giving birth
- These conditions are not the parent's fault
- Individuals may experience both anxiety and depression or just one of the conditions
- Bipolar disorders which can look like severe depression can develop after giving birth
- Postpartum psychosis is a rare disorder that develops very soon after the baby is born, is accompanied by sudden turbulent feelings, and requires immediate medical attention



Your Partner's Mental Health

- Having a new baby can be stressful for everyone involved and can lead to similar mental health symptoms for dads, partners and adoptive parents.
- Postpartum depression (PPD) and anxiety can affect parents and their partners, regardless of age, personality type, and economic status.



Risk Factors

- History of depression and/or anxiety
- Depression and/or anxiety while pregnant
- Recent stressful life events
- Lacking a support system
- Relationship problems
- Low self-esteem
- Financial problems
- The pregnancy was unplanned or unwanted
- Having a baby with special needs
- Problems with alcoholism or drug use



Family and Friends Can Help

Mood disorders are an illness and not a sign that a parent is weak or not working hard enough to get better. Partners, family, and friends can provide support.

How you can help:

- Offer words of encouragement and support
- Acknowledge that he/she is trying hard and deserves support to help them through
- Encourage him/her to seek therapy and medical attention
- Make specific offers of help
- Call during the day to check in
- Be patient



Getting Help

The good news is there are several effective treatment options for parents with postpartum depression and other postpartum conditions.

These treatments include:

- Using self-help techniques
- Getting support from a new mom's social network
- Professional counseling
- Prescribed medication

Have a Plan of Action!

Find your symptom(s):	Next step(s):	Reach out to:
<p><u>Symptoms can include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not feeling like yourself • Having trouble managing emotions • Feeling overwhelmed but are still able to care for yourself and baby • Experiencing mood swings that happen to many parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take care of yourself • Ask for help from your support system so you can rest • Continue to monitor your symptoms • Talk to your healthcare provider 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HealthySteps with MU Pediatrics, 573-884-8045; Enroll before 5 months <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Free team-based well-child visits, consults, support line & screenings • Parents as Teachers (PAT), Call 573-214-3955 to enroll for Free <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Parenting support, referrals, health screenings; Prenatal – kindergarten • ParentLink, 573-882-7323 – Free to use phone support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Experts answer parenting questions and provide resources • Tiger Tot Mommies, 573-771-6675 or find on Facebook <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Free parenting support group and lactation consultants at each meeting
<p><u>Symptoms can include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling depressed or down • Scary thoughts about the baby that don't go away • Fear of being alone with the baby • Uncontrollable feelings like anger or rage • Fear of losing control • Overwhelming guilt or shame about parenting or birth • Feeling worried all the time • Feeling hopeless • Severe sleep disturbances or nightmares • Out-of-character restlessness or irritability • Feeling like a burden • Significant mood swings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get help • Talk to your doctor, visit a clinic, or schedule time with a therapist or counselor • Talk to your partner, family, or friends about your feelings so they can help 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burrell, 573-777-7500 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Assessment and treatment. Walk-In Clinic Monday – Friday, 8 am – 3pm • Lutheran Family Children's Services, 573-815-9955 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Free services for Boone County residents including assessment, individualized counseling, and group therapy • Family Health Center, 573-214-2314 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Assessment and treatment services offered on a sliding scale. Insurance is not required • Family Counseling Associates, 573-874-8818 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ All insurances are accepted • South Providence Psychiatry, 573-882-2511 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Priority scheduling for postpartum depression/anxiety • Braving the First Year, Email office@brave-mo.com for info or to sign up <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Online, professionally facilitated emotional support group
<p><u>Symptoms can include:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid weight loss • Confused thinking • Speaking much quicker than normal • Unable to sleep for 48 hours • Feeling out of touch with reality • Fear of hurting yourself or your baby • Thinking about suicide 	<p>GET HELP NOW</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Missouri Psychiatric Center (MUPC), 573-884-1255 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ 3 Hospital Dr, Columbia, MO 65212 ◦ Provides emergency assessment and treatment • Burrell 24 Hour Crisis Hotline, 1-800-395-2132 • Family Counseling Associates After Hours Crisis Line, 1-800-833-3915 • Call 9-1-1 for immediate help