

Depression and Anxiety **During Pregnancy and Postpartum**

- ❖ **Is it normal to feel sad and nervous after the birth of a baby?**
 - ❖ Many new moms feel weepy and anxious. This is normal and is called the “Baby Blues.” It goes away with rest, food, support, and time.
 - ❖ Up to 20% of all pregnant and new mothers have more lasting depression or anxiety.
 - ❖ Depression or anxiety is not just a mood. If your symptoms are disturbing, get in the way of your daily life, or last over two weeks you need to reach out for help. You don’t have to go through this alone.

- ❖ **What are some symptoms of Perinatal Mood Disorders (Pregnancy or Postpartum Depression or Anxiety)?**
 - ❖ Sadness, anger, excessive worry or nervousness, feeling out of control or overwhelmed.
 - ❖ Changes/ extremes in sleeping or eating habits i.e. not being able to sleep when baby sleeps, wanting to sleep all the time.
 - ❖ Fears or scary thoughts that don’t go away.
 - ❖ Feeling anxious or insecure, and nervous about being alone.

- ❖ **What should I do if I think I have Perinatal Mood Disorder?**
 - ❖ Call your medical provider.
 - ❖ Call a therapist who specializes in treating pregnant or postpartum women.
 - ❖ Contact the PPD IL Alliance www.PPDil.org or 847 205-4455 (a helpline volunteer will call you back within 24 hrs) for support, information, and resources.
 - ❖ Ask friends or family for help so you can take breaks.
 - ❖ Tell someone how you feel and find someone you trust that can help you.
 - ❖ If you feel that you need immediate care, call your local hospital, 911 or 1-800-SUICIDE.

- ❖ **What will help me feel better?**
 - ❖ Support and reliable information about getting through depression and anxiety
 - ❖ Good nutrition and eating every three hours to keep your blood sugar in balance
 - ❖ Rest and breaks from childcare
 - ❖ Therapy and/or medicine from a trusted healthcare provider
 - ❖ Fresh air and movement – getting out of the house
 - ❖ Talking to other women and families who have been through it and recovered
 - ❖ Practical help with chores

- ❖ **AM I AT RISK?**

Check the statements that are true for you:

 - It’s hard for me to ask for help. I usually take care of myself.
 - Before my periods, I usually get sad, angry, or very cranky.
 - I’ve been depressed or anxious in the past.
 - I am been depressed or anxious when I’m pregnant.
 - My mother, sister, or aunt was depressed or very nervous after her baby was born.
 - Sometimes I don’t need sleep, have lots of ideas, and it’s hard to slow down.
 - My family is far away and I feel lonely.
 - I don’t have many friends nearby that I can rely on.
 - I am pregnant right now and I don’t feel happy about it.
 - I don’t have the money, food, or housing that I need.
 - I have a lot of stress and other major changes going on at the moment

Checking more than two items in the above list suggests that you have risk factors for depression or anxiety during pregnancy or postpartum. With help, all of these symptoms are temporary and treatable.

You are not alone. You are not to blame. With help, you will be well.