



Postnatal Depression and Anxiety

Virtual Parenting Hub - Online advice, support, and guidance empowering parents to work through challenges and find solutions.



Postnatal Depression and Anxiety

- Adjusting to parenthood can take some time, not only is it a life change, but parents are also experiencing lack of sleep, changes in routines and increased responsibilities.
- You may experience a wide range of feelings when becoming a parent, from excitement and joy to feeling stressed, sad, or overwhelmed.
- Most Mothers will experience the 'baby blues', which usually starts around day 3 to 10. You may feel teary, sad, or irritable. These emotions last only a few days and with the support of your partner and family will resolve. If you are experiencing these feelings for more than 2 weeks, you could be developing postnatal depression or anxiety.
- It is thought that approximately 1 in 5 women and 1 in 10 men experience postnatal depression or anxiety in the first 12 months after birth. If you or your partner are experiencing postnatal depression or anxiety it is important to seek help as early as possible, to help a quick recovery and maintain a strong parent-child connection.



Challenges that some parents may experience

- Recovering from birth and caring for your baby
- Tiredness and exhaustion
- Learning to breastfeed
- Lack of confidence
- Balancing your baby's, your own and the household needs
- Changing routines
- Increased responsibilities
- Balancing the demands of other family members
- Changes in relationships

Signs and Symptoms of Postnatal Depression/Anxiety

- Teary and sad a lot of the time
- Ongoing low mood
- Angry or irritable
- Hard to get out of bed
- Withdraw from family and friends
- Loose interest in activities you usually enjoy
- Loss of appetite
- Disturbances in sleep
- Loss of confidence
- Scared or panicky
- Often feeling worried about your baby or yourself
- Fear of being alone or leaving the house
- Fear of being alone with your baby

Treatment and getting Help

If you think you have postnatal depression or anxiety, it is important to seek professional help early. There are many treatment options available which you can discuss with your Doctor.

- Tell your family how you feel and get some emotional support
- Get some practical support from your partner and family
- Speak to your Child and Family Health Nurse or your GP
- Call the help lines as listed below
- Your doctor may refer you to a Psychologist for some behavioural and interpersonal therapy.
- Your doctor will give you a mental health care plan, so you get a medicare rebate for 20 sessions with a mental health professional of your choice
- Sometimes your doctor may suggest medication, an anti-depressant
- Hospital admission may be required for severe cases

Looking after yourself

- Get some fresh air and regular exercise
- Eat healthy nutritious foods and keep hydrated
- Minimise caffeine drinks
- Try some deep breathing or guided meditations
- Yoga or stretching
- Get enough sleep, sleep when your baby sleeps and go to bed early
- Ask for help from your family or friends

***PANDA National Help Line 1300 726 306 (Mon-Fri, 9am to 7.30pm)**
Beyond Blue National Help Line 1300 22 4636 (24 hours/7 days)
Lifeline 13 11 14*

References

1. panda.org.au
2. beyondblue.org.au
3. raisingchildren.net.au