Remember...

Perinatal depression and anxiety are common health conditions that need to be treated.

With the right help, she can feel better.

YOU can help her to get the care she needs.

Who to Call for Help

Keep the phone numbers of her doctor, nurse or midwife on hand.

Postpartum Support International
1-800-944-4773 or Text: 503-894-9453
For support and local resources

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-TALK (8255)
To talk to a crisis counselor 24/7 about any mental health issue

For More Information

Moms’ Mental Health Matters
https://www1.nichd.nih.gov/ncmhep

Postpartum Support International
https://www.postpartum.net
Has resources for both moms and dads

MotherToBaby
https://mothertobaby.org
Experts on Medicines & More During Pregnancy & Breastfeeding

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Perinatal depression is a condition that many pregnant women and new mothers struggle with. A woman with this condition may feel very sad or very anxious. Perinatal depression can make it hard for a woman to take care of herself or her baby.

It can happen to any mother. 1 in 7 women will experience perinatal depression. It can happen during pregnancy or up to a year after the baby’s birth. It can affect women of any age, race, ethnicity, culture, income or education. It’s a serious condition but there are treatments that work.

Effective treatments include:
- Social support, including support groups
- Medicine
- Counseling

Many women feel tearful and exhausted when they bring their new baby home. But if symptoms last for more than 2 weeks, she may have perinatal depression or anxiety.

It’s more than the “baby blues”
- She might hurt herself or the baby
- She may not be able to take care of herself or her baby
- She doesn’t seem to enjoy things she used to enjoy
- She seems very anxious, nervous or irritable
- She seems to have trouble focusing and coping with daily tasks
- She has little interest in things she used to enjoy
- She seems to feel sad, hopeless or stressed most of the time

Are you worried that...

Does she...

If you’re worried about her safety or the baby’s safety, this is a medical emergency. Call 911 or take her to the nearest emergency room.

Signs and Symptoms

If you’re worried about her safety or the baby’s safety, this is a medical emergency. Call 911 or take her to the nearest emergency room. Help out around the house. Help with baby care and household chores. Exercise and have some time to herself. Allow her to focus on her own needs. Give her time to see friends or listen to her. Let her know you’re there for her feelings and offer support.

Encourage her to get help. Have her call her doctor, nurse or midwife. It’s what you can do.

If a woman you know shows signs of perinatal depression or anxiety, how can you help?

With help, women with perinatal depression or anxiety can get better. Getting help can make all the difference for the woman, the baby and the family.

How You Can Help

If a woman you know shows signs of perinatal depression or anxiety:

- Encourage her to get help.
- Have her call her doctor, nurse or midwife.
- Help her to make the call if she needs it.
- Listen to her.
- Let her talk about her feelings and offer support.
- Allow her to focus on her own needs.
- Give her time to see friends or family members or friends.
- Help out around the house.
- Help with baby care and household chores.
- Take time for yourself.

A mother’s depression can be hard on the whole family. So remember to take care of yourself, too.

How to Recognize a Problem with Depression or Anxiety

Family members or friends may be the first to recognize a problem with depression or anxiety when a woman is pregnant or has just had a baby. Keep an eye out for these signs.

Anxiety may show itself in ways that are different from depression. For example, a woman who is depressed may feel tired and sad, while a woman who is anxious may feel jumpy and anxious.

Did you know?

Fathers can suffer from depression, too, before or after the baby is born. This happens to 1 in 10 fathers. Fathers should seek help, too.