



We Can Help with Perinatal Mental Health

Having a baby is supposed to be an amazing experience—the best moment of your life. Everyone says, “You must be so happy!”

But what if you’re not? What if you’re depressed, anxious, or overwhelmed? What if your partner or friends are worried about you, but you just don’t know how to talk about it?

You’re not alone. Postpartum Support International can help you get better.

Many people face mental health challenges during the perinatal period—pregnancy, post-loss, and the 12 months postpartum. In fact, perinatal mental health (PMH) disorders are the most common complication of childbearing in the U.S.

Although most people are familiar with postpartum depression, there are several other forms of PMH disorders, including anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, bipolar disorder, and psychosis. They can affect parents of every culture, age, income, and race. Please see the back of this sheet for a complete list of PMH disorders.

Left untreated, PMH disorders can lead to premature or underweight births, impaired parent-child bonding, and learning and behavior problems later in childhood. They can even raise the risk of maternal mortality. The good news is that support and resources are available and can help prevent these complications.

PSI Can Help

Postpartum Support International (PSI) can connect you with the support and help you need. Whether it’s simply talking with others who have been where you are or finding a professional who can provide treatment, PSI is there for you. For 35 years, we’ve provided resources and programs to help give new families the strongest and healthiest start possible.

(Turn this sheet over to learn more about our programs.)

Ask Yourself

- Are you feeling sad or depressed?
- Do you feel more irritable or angry with those around you?
- Are you having difficulty bonding with your baby?
- Do you feel anxious or panicky?
- Are you having problems with eating or sleeping?
- Are you having upsetting thoughts that you can’t get out of your mind?
- Do you feel as if you are “out of control” or “going crazy?”
- Do you feel like you never should have become a parent?
- Are you worried that you might hurt your baby or yourself?

Any of these symptoms, and many more, could mean that you have a perinatal mental health disorder.

The good news is that you can get treatments that will help you feel like yourself again. **There is no reason to continue to suffer. Go to postpartum.net for more information.**



Perinatal Mental Health Disorders

PMH Disorders

The perinatal period includes pregnancy, post-loss, and the 12 months postpartum.

Perinatal Depression

Symptoms may include feelings of anger, sadness, irritability, guilt, lack of interest in your baby, changes in eating and sleeping habits, trouble concentrating, hopelessness, and sometimes even thoughts of harming your baby or yourself.

Perinatal Anxiety

Symptoms may include extreme worries and fears, often over the health and safety of your baby. Some people have panic attacks, which can include shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness, numbness and tingling, and a feeling of losing control.

Perinatal Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Symptoms may include repetitive, upsetting, and unwanted thoughts or mental images (obsessions),

and/or the need to avoid triggers to certain things over and over (compulsions).

Postpartum Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

This is often caused by a traumatic or frightening childbirth or past trauma. Symptoms may include flashbacks of the trauma with feelings of anxiety and the need to avoid things related to that event.

Bipolar Mood Disorders

Many people are diagnosed for the first time with bipolar depression or mania during pregnancy or afterward. A bipolar mood disorder can appear as severe depression.

Perinatal Psychosis

Symptoms may include the inability to sleep, seeing images or hearing voices that others can't. You may believe things that aren't true and distrust those around you or have periods of confusion, mania, depression, or memory loss. This condition is uncommon but dangerous, so it is important to seek professional help immediately.

PSI Programs

PSI offers a wealth of resources for a wide range of needs, situations, and audiences. Our key programs for affected individuals and families include:

- > **PSI HelpLine**, a toll-free phone number 1-800-944-4773 anyone can call for basic information, support, and resources. Support via text message is also available at 800-944-4773 and 971-203-7773 (Español).
- > **Peer Support**, over 30 Online Support Groups available five days a week, a Peer Mentor Program that pairs individuals in need with a trained volunteer who has also experienced and fully recovered from a PMH disorder.
- > **Chat with an Expert**, facilitated by licensed mental health professionals, these sessions provide an opportunity to seek general information about PMH disorders from a PSI expert.
- > **Online Provider Directory** (psidirectory.net) that helps individuals and families quickly and easily connect with qualified perinatal mental health providers in their area.

IT'S
IMPORTANT
to get the support and
care you need.

- > **Climb Out of the Darkness**, an international community event that brings together survivors, providers, and supporters in the world's largest PMH awareness and fundraising event.

You can also find support, learn more about our programs, and get involved at postpartum.net



Call the PSI HelpLine at 1-800-944-4773 (English and Spanish) or visit postpartum.net
Text "Help" to 800-944-4773 for English. Mande un mensaje a 971-203-7773 por ayuda en español.