



Postpartum Support Guide



Having a baby can be exciting, but also overwhelming. It is normal to have many different feelings during pregnancy and for the first year after birth. Recognizing those feelings and getting support can help you cope with them. It can also help you know when to reach out for help from a health care provider. If you or someone you know needs help, remember that you are not alone, and there are many services available to support you.

What are the “baby blues”?

It’s common to feel physically and emotionally drained after having a baby due to changes in hormones. These “baby blues” typically happen 2-5 days after delivery and may cause you to feel sad, anxious, moody or have trouble sleeping. Practicing self-care as much as possible, asking for help from family and friends, and connecting with other parents can help. Symptoms of the “baby blues” usually get better on their own within two weeks. If they become worse or last longer, this could be a sign of postpartum depression, and you should reach out to your health care provider as soon as possible.

What is Postpartum Depression?

Postpartum depression is a condition that can affect the brain, behavior, and physical health due to hormonal changes, adjusting to parenthood, and exhaustion. It’s important to reach out for help since feelings of sadness or hopelessness usually do not go away on their own. Postpartum depression is more common than you think and is very treatable with the right care.

Other Perinatal Mental Health Conditions

Other mental health conditions can occur during pregnancy and the postpartum period. These include anxiety, bipolar mood disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, and post-traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD). Symptoms can be similar to postpartum depression but need different treatments. It’s important to reach out to your health care provider for help so they can make sure you receive the treatment that works best for you.

General Signs & Symptoms of Postpartum Depression

- Feeling restless
- Increased crying
- Lack of energy
- Feeling anxious, jumpy, irritable, or angry
- Sleeping too much or not enough
- Eating too much or not enough
- Feeling guilt and despair

If your symptoms become worse and include hallucinations, confusion, paranoia, or concerns about harming yourself or your baby, you may have a rare condition called Postpartum Psychosis. Call 911 right away for help.

Postpartum & Mental Health Resources

MASSACHUSETTS SERVICES

Massachusetts Postpartum Support International Warm Line

Toll-free number providing support, listings of local counselors, support groups and information. Calls are returned within 24 hours.

Call: 866-472-1897

Visit: www.psichapters.com/ma

Massachusetts Behavioral Health Helpline (BHHL)

Available 24 hours a day and can provide interpretation in 200+ languages. The line connects anyone in Massachusetts with treatment or resources for mental health, substance use and health-related social needs. From a routine question to a crisis situation, the BHHL can help.

Call or text: 833-773-2445

Chat: www.masshelpline.com/contact

Parent Stress Line

Available to parents and guardians who are experiencing stress or who are overwhelmed. If you need someone to talk to, the Parent Stress Line is available 24 hours a day and has trained volunteer counselors who offer both sympathetic and non-judgmental support. Translation services are available.

Call: 1-800-632-8188

Visit: <https://parentshelpingparents.org>

Massachusetts SafeLink

Statewide domestic violence hotline with translation services that are available 24/7. It provides safety planning, support for survivors and information regarding safety shelters. Available in a number of languages.

Call: 877-785-2020

Chat Online: CasaMyrna.org/chat

Visit: www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-safelink-resources



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NATIONAL SERVICES

National Maternal Mental Health Hotline

Confidential service that is available 24/7 for pregnant people, new parents and those who support them. Over 60 languages are available via interpreter services.

Call or text in English/Spanish: 1-833-852-6262

Postpartum Support International HelpLine

Toll-free phone number for information, support, and resources. Calls and texts are returned every day of the week between 8:00am–11:00pm.

Call in English/Spanish: 1-800-944-4773 (4PPD)

Text in English: 800-944-4773;

Text in Spanish: 971-203-7773

Visit: www.postpartum.net/get-help/psi-helpline

National Alliance on Mental Illness

Provides information, resources, and support.

Call: 800-950-6264

Text: 62640

Visit: www.nami.org

NATIONAL CRISIS LINES

Emergency hotlines are available 24/7 in English and Spanish to access immediate emergency telephone counseling.

National Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741

National Suicide & Crisis Lifeline: Dial 988

