

Action Plan for Mood Changes during Pregnancy or After Giving Birth

Feeling down, mood swings, feeling anxious, overwhelmed, and scared are very common for women during and after pregnancy. If your feelings are impacting your life or your ability to care for you or your baby, we want to make sure you have the resources and support you need. If a few of these feelings sound like you, see below for what you can do.

If you...

Feel like you just aren't yourself
 Have trouble managing your emotions (ups and/or downs)
 Feel overwhelmed, but are still able to care for yourself and your baby
 Feel mild irritability
 Have slight difficulty falling asleep
 Have occasional difficulty focusing on a task
 Are less hungry than usual

You may be experiencing emotional changes that happen to many pregnant individuals and new parents. You should...

Take special care of yourself. Get your partner to watch the baby, get a babysitter, or team up with another person to share childcare so that you can rest and exercise.

Continue to watch for the signs of emotional mood changes in the yellow and red sections below.

Find someone to talk to if things get worse. Talk to a health care provider if you feel unsure.

If you...

Feel intense uneasiness that hits with no warning
 Feel foggy and have more difficulty completing tasks than usual
 Notice that you have stopped doing things that you used to enjoy
 Have scary or upsetting thoughts that don't go away
 Feel guilty, or are having thoughts that you are failing at motherhood
 Are having difficulty falling or staying asleep (that doesn't have to do with getting up with your baby)
 Are falling behind with your job or schoolwork, or struggling in your relationships with family and/or friends
 Have family/friends mention that your mood seems off, or you're not acting like your usual self
 Are being overwhelmed by feelings of worry
 Have periods of feeling really "up," and overly happy where you are doing more activities than usual, then feel very sad, "down," or hopeless
 Are taking risks you usually wouldn't
 Are on edge or always looking out for possible danger/threats
 Feel numb or detached, like you are just going through the motions
 Have no interest in eating – food tastes like nothing
 Have thoughts of hurting yourself

You may be experiencing emotional changes during or after your pregnancy for which you should get help. You should...

Contact us. Your mental health is important to us. We are here to help.

Talk to your partner, family, and friends about these feelings so they can help you.

Contact your insurance company to find mental health providers.

Visit the Anxiety and Depression Association of America's telehealth providers: https://adaa.org/finding-help/telemental-health/provider_listing

Call Postpartum Support International (PSI) 1-800-944-4773 (voice in English or Spanish), 800-944-4773 (text in English), 971-203-7773 (text in Spanish), to contact a volunteer who can provide support and resources in your area, or search online for a mental health provider at <https://psidirectory.com/>

Search the National Center for Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) at <https://www.ptsd.va.gov/>

Read or complete workbook materials: *Pregnancy & Postpartum Anxiety Workbook* by Pamela S. Wiegartz and Kevin Gyoerkoe

If you...

Feel hopeless and in total despair
 Feel out of touch with reality (you may see or hear things that other people don't)
 Feel that you may hurt yourself or your baby
 Have family/friends that are worried about your or other's safety due to your mood swings and/or changes in activity levels

Get help now!

Go to the local emergency room or call 9-1-1 for immediate help.

If you are in a mental health crisis, call the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at 988.

Call the APAL crisis line 888-290-1336

Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for free and confidential emotional support

Still not sure what to do? Call us and we'll figure it out together

Getting help is the best thing you can do for yourself and your baby. Your mental health is important to us, please call us with any concerns or questions. We are here to help.