

Things Every Parent Should Know

Pregnancy, childbirth, and parenting bring dramatic changes to your life - and your emotional health. While it can be an exciting and joyful time, the changes that accompany the perinatal period can also leave you feeling anxious, sad, tired, overwhelmed, and irritable.

Your moods might be changing right now.

When we're pregnant and postpartum our brains and bodies can change dramatically. And these changes can happen whether or not you're the one who gives birth, because these changes aren't just hormonal. We might change how we eat, sleep, live, and work too - and these changes can affect our mental health.



Perinatal mental health conditions are common.

Many of us have mental health conditions - and some of us will develop them for the first time when we're pregnant or postpartum. It's helpful to know that perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs) are the most common complication of pregnancy. **1 in 5 of us will experience them.**



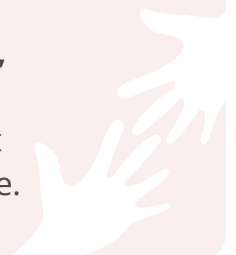
Perinatal mental health conditions are treatable.

Taking care of our mental health begins with talking about it. Asking questions and screening for specific conditions is an important part of health care. **There are therapies, interventions, and medications that can help.** When you know what's available, you can work with your care team to find the solutions that are right for you.



You are not alone.

People care about your health and wellbeing. **Your pregnancy, postpartum, NICU, and pediatric care providers can help you connect with the support you need.** Some specialty care and services are covered by insurance - and may cost a fee. But there are other programs and community-based supports that are free for everyone.



Your Mental Health

It can be scary.

Some of the things you're experiencing might feel familiar, but other things might feel unfamiliar and new. It's helpful to understand that all of these feelings are normal.

Many of us may have intrusive thoughts and scary feelings. Some of us may have delusions, hallucinations, or distorted thoughts. When this happens, we can ask for help.



National Maternal Mental Health Hotline **1-833-TLC-MAMA**
Suicide and Crisis Lifeline dial **988** 988lifeline.org
Postpartum Support Help Line **1-800-944-4773** (4PPD)

There are things you can do.

No matter what you're feeling, there are things you can do to feel better. **Feeling better begins with talking about what you're feeling and asking for what you need.**

We know we can help each other. We know there are tools and strategies that work. Sometimes it starts with something as easy as getting a little extra sleep.



You will feel better.

Many of us have felt the way you're feeling now. When you're struggling, it's easy to think things will never get better. But that's not true. **The most important thing we want you to know is that - with support - you will feel better.**

We all need help sometimes. So we've created resources that we know can help.



Support is available.

Once you know what is available **you can choose the interventions that are best for you and that reflect your goals and values.** For many of us, that includes counseling and medications. There are also free support groups. Our NICU community is filled with people who care about you and want to make things better.



Everyone needs support sometimes.
With help, you can feel better.