

Postpartum Depression Information for Professionals

If you have a patient who wants support now, they can call or text the **National Maternal Mental Health Hotline** at **1-833-TLC-MAMA (1-833-852-6262)**. TTY users can use a preferred relay service or dial **711** and then **1-833-852-6262**. This care is available 24/7.

If they are in mental health distress or a suicidal crisis, they can call or text the **Suicide and Crisis Lifeline** at **988** for free and confidential support.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about **1 in 8 women** reported experiencing symptoms of postpartum depression (PPD) in the year after giving birth. Women experiencing PPD may feel sad, anxious, overwhelmed, disconnected from their baby, or might not feel love or care for their baby. If they have these feelings for longer than two weeks, they may have PPD. The signs of PPD can begin during pregnancy or in the months following birth and may last a year or more.

PPD is more serious than the “baby blues”, lasts longer, and may need to be treated by a health care or mental health professional. PPD is associated with poor maternal and infant health outcomes. Screening and referral to treatment are crucial to help women experiencing PPD and their babies.

Although new moms may interact with many professionals, such as the obstetrician, gynecologist, primary care provider, or the baby’s pediatrician, many are not screened for postpartum depression. The **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention** reported that one in five women reported not being asked during prenatal visits about depression, and one in eight reported not being asked about depression during postpartum visits.

How Can Health Care Professionals Help?

As health care professionals, it is crucial to understand and recognize the signs, symptoms, risk factors, and available treatment options for PPD to provide appropriate care and support to women who may be affected. The **United States Preventive Services Task Force** recommends universal screening of pregnant and postpartum women.

To support your patients at risk for or experiencing PPD, you can:

- Learn about postpartum depression screening, diagnosis, and treatment options
- Ask every pregnant and postpartum woman about symptoms of depression
- Identify local resources for referral to treatment and follow-up



Resources to Learn More

National and state level data on prevalence of self-reported postpartum depressive symptoms

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System](#)

Reproductive and mental health information

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Depression Among Women](#)
- [Office on Women's Health: Reproductive Health and Mental Health](#)

Screening, diagnosis, treatment, and research information

- [National Institutes of Health: Mom's Mental Health Matters — for Providers](#)
- [National Library of Medicine's MedlinePlus: Postpartum Depression](#)
- [Alliance for Innovation on Maternal Health: Patient Safety Bundles - Perinatal Mental Health Conditions](#)
- [Lifeline for Moms: Perinatal Mental Health Toolkit](#)
- [U.S. Preventive Services Task Force: Perinatal Depression — Preventive Interventions](#)
- [American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists: Perinatal Mental Health Toolkit](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics: Perinatal Mental Health and Social Support — Physician Education and Training](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Hear Her Campaign](#)

Medicine and pregnancy information

- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: Treating for Two](#)
- [U.S. Food and Drug Administration: Medicine and Pregnancy](#)
- [MotherToBaby: Information about Medications in Pregnancy and Lactation](#)

Medication and breastfeeding information

- [National Institute of Child Health and Human Development: LactMed Database](#)
- [MotherToBaby: Information about Medications in Pregnancy and Lactation](#)

PPD services

- [Postpartum Support International](#)
 - Information for at-risk women
 - Information on services
 - Training courses for professionals

Local resources

- Ask other health care professionals who specialize in women's health issues and working with new mothers
- Reach out to local organizations like social service agencies, family resource centers, libraries, community centers, or places of worship
- Look for support groups in your area, such as new moms' groups or breastfeeding support groups, a baby café, or mother/baby group classes

To learn more, visit
www.womenshealth.gov/talkingPPD



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