



MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH

Anxiety and/or depression during pregnancy and the first year after giving birth affect up to 1 in 5 new or expectant mothers and their families.*

BEING A NEW MOTHER CAN AFFECT YOUR MENTAL HEALTH



**IF FOLLOWING CHILDBIRTH YOU EXPERIENCE EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL CHANGES THAT
ADVERSELY AFFECT YOU OR YOUR FAMILY'S MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

YOU MAY BE SUFFERING FROM A POSTPARTUM DISORDER.

What are Perinatal Disorders?

Mental health complications can occur in women during the perinatal period, from time of conception through the infant's first year of life.

Postpartum Blues or "Baby Blues"

Characterized by mood swings, postpartum blues are normal reactions that many mothers experience following childbirth. The onset usually occurs three to five days after delivery, and should subside as hormone levels begin to stabilize.

Postpartum Depression (PPD)

PPD is a major form of depression and is less common than postpartum blues. PPD includes all the symptoms of depression but occurs only following childbirth. It can begin any time after delivery and can last up to a year. PPD is estimated to occur in approximately 10 to 20 percent of new mothers.

Anxiety

A woman with anxiety may experience extreme worries and fears, often over the health and safety of the baby. Some women have panic attacks and might feel shortness of breath, chest pain, dizziness, a feeling of losing control, and numbness and tingling.*

Panic Disorder

This is a form of anxiety in which the sufferer feels very nervous and has recurring panic attacks. During a panic attack, she may experience shortness of breath, chest pain, claustrophobia, dizziness, heart palpitations, and numbness and tingling in the extremities. Panic attacks seem to go in waves, but they are temporary and resolve without assistance.*

Family and Friends

Perinatal Disorders can be devastating to both the mother and child as well as the family as a whole.

Family members and friends may be the first to recognize symptoms of postpartum depression in a new mother. They can encourage her to talk with a health care provider, offer emotional support, and assist with daily tasks such as caring for the baby or the home.

Postpartum Psychosis (PPP)

In rare cases, women may experience PPP, a condition that affects about one in 1,000 of new mothers. Onset is quick and severe, and usually occurs within the first two to three weeks following childbirth. Symptoms are similar to those of general psychotic reactions such as delusions and hallucinations.

Birth-Related Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

After childbirth, women may also experience post traumatic stress disorder. PTSD includes two key elements: (1) Experiencing or witnessing an event involving actual or threatened danger to the self or others, and (2) Responding with intense fear, helplessness or horror.

Obsessive Compulsive Disorder

OCD is characterized by repetitive, upsetting and unwanted thoughts or mental images (obsessions), and sometimes they need to do certain things over and over (compulsions) to reduce the anxiety caused by those thoughts.*

*Information obtained from Postpartum Support Virginia, 2019

** Information obtained from National Perinatal Association, 2018

M A T E R N A L M E N T A L H E A L T H

What are the signs & symptoms of Perinatal Disorders?

Emotional and Physical Symptoms

Persistent Sadness Anxiety
Feeling overwhelmed or "empty"
Crying Episodes
Chronic Fatigue Panic Attacks
Loss of Interest in previously
enjoyable activities
Problems with concentration or making
simple decisions

Avoidant Behaviors
Persistent Self-Doubt
Changes in Sleeping and/or Eating Patterns
Feelings of Hopelessness,
Helplessness, or Guilt
Experiencing angry and/or irritable moods
Fear of being alone or
separated for your baby

What are the treatment options for Perinatal Disorders?

The most successful treatment plan for perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs) may include:

Complete Medication Examination

Some medical conditions, such as a thyroid imbalance and anemia, are fairly common in the postpartum period and can contribute to feelings of depression and lethargy)

A psychiatric evaluation

Self-help techniques

Participation in a support group

Talk therapy with a psychologist or counselor

Medication and/or hospitalization when necessary*

MHA Georgia's

Tips and Tricks to Mental Health Wellness!

- 1 Know Your Triggers and Early Warning Signs of a Manic or Depressive Episode
- 2 Create Your Emergency Action Plan with Contacts, Medications and Preferred Treatment Plan
- 3 Don't Isolate! Join a Support Group or Build New Relationships for Face to Face Connection
- 4 Develop an Active Daily Routine with Healthy Lifestyle Choices
- 5 Keep Stress to a Minimum by using Relaxation Techniques and making Leisure Time a Priority
- 6 Watch what you put in your body by avoiding harmful substances and eating right!



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For Immediate Access to Routine or Crisis Services
Georgia Crisis & Access Line
1-800-715-4225
mygcal.com



This project was supported in part by the Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (CFDA 93.558). Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Georgia Department of Human Services, Division of Family and Children Services or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (CFDA 93.558).

This information was provided by the National Institute of Mental Health. For additional information, please visit www.nimh.gov