

Maternal Depression

Pregnancy and new motherhood can bring a range of thoughts, emotions and experiences. While this journey often brings excitement and joy, it also brings challenges, anxiety, overwhelm and stress. If you are feeling badly for more than two weeks, please know that support, treatment and care are available. Please do not suffer in silence. You deserve to feel well. This is an important time in life for you and your developing baby.

Did You Know...

1 in 7 women in the US experience perinatal mental health complications (CDC)

It is normal to be scared to talk to someone about the way you are feeling for fear of judgement. You are not alone in this struggle. Maternal depression affects women across the nation and world. It is important to know that your symptoms are not due to something you did or did not do during your pregnancy or after birth. Depression and anxiety are medical conditions and are treatable if you seek help.



It looks different for everyone

Each mother experiences symptoms differently.

There are many reasons mothers experience these difficult changes in thoughts, feelings and behaviors. You are not to blame!

- Having a lasting sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness.
- Feelings of irritability or restlessness
- Loss of energy
- Problems concentrating, recalling details, and making decisions
- Difficulty falling asleep or sleeping too much.
- Overeating or loss of appetite
- Suicidal thoughts, and/or perinatal scary thoughts
- Feeling distant from your baby
- Withdrawing from loved ones



There is support!

Prioritizing your mental health is an important practice, which can help to support the wellbeing of both you and your child. It isn't "selfish" to be concerned with self-care and focusing on your own needs; practicing self-care may be more important now than ever. Speak to your provider about your treatment and support options.

There are resources, including those for pregnant and parenting women struggling with alcohol and substance use.

[Postpartum Support International](http://www.postpartum.net/get-help/help-for-moms/) offers free resources to mothers such as a Helpline, PSI Coordinators, Online Support Meetings and Specialized Coordinators including a Substance Use and Moms Coordinator. www.postpartum.net/get-help/help-for-moms/

[Connecticut Chapter of Postpartum Support International \(PSI-CT\)](http://www.psictchapter.com/) offers a safety net of supports and services for pregnant and postpartum mothers and their families through free services from PSI Coordinators and support groups. www.psictchapter.com

[Healthy Beginnings](http://www.huskyhealthct.org/members/members_healthybeginnings.html) is a voluntary program for HUSKY Health members who are pregnant or who have recently given birth. Nurses will work with you to help you have the healthiest pregnancy possible. www.huskyhealthct.org/members/members_healthybeginnings.html

[Connecticut Health Network](http://www.chnct.org/) provides care coordination and case management for pregnant and postpartum Medicaid/Husky members. <http://www.chnct.org/>

[Connecticut United Way 211 Infoline - Perinatal/Postpartum Depression:](https://uwc.211ct.org/perinatal-depression-postpartum-depression/) <https://uwc.211ct.org/perinatal-depression-postpartum-depression/>

[The Women's REACH](https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS/Programs-and-Services/Women/Womens-REACH-Program) program provides female Recovery Navigators for pregnant or parenting women with substance use or co-occurring disorders. <https://portal.ct.gov/DMHAS/Programs-and-Services/Women/Womens-REACH-Program>

[The PROUD program \(Parents Recovering from Opioid Use Disorders\)](https://portal.ct.gov/PROUD) offers support and family-centered treatment to pregnant women and mothers of infants or young children, in all stages of substance use recovery. portal.ct.gov/PROUD

[Hartford Hospital Peripartum Mood Disorders Program](https://hartfordhealthcare.org/about-hartford-healthcare/connect-to-healthier/health-essentials/peripartum-mood-disorders) offers evaluation, medication therapy and support group as well as psychotherapy resources. <https://hartfordhealthcare.org/about-hartford-healthcare/connect-to-healthier/health-essentials/peripartum-mood-disorders>

[Mother To Baby CT](http://www.mothersobabyct.org) is a free consultation service for providers and families searching for guidance on any substance interference with pregnancy development and breastfeeding. They provide telephone or in person consultation and has many fact sheets on psychotropic medications in pregnancy available on line. Go to www.mothersobabyct.org

[Hope After Loss](http://www.hopeafterloss.org) supports parents and families who have experienced the loss of their baby during pregnancy or anytime during the infant's life. www.hopeafterloss.org