

# Perinatal Mental Health During the Coronavirus (Covid- 19) Pandemic

Frequently Asked Questions:

Mental and Emotional Wellbeing



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## Frequently Asked Questions

### Mental and Emotional Wellbeing

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Coronavirus disease, also known as Covid-19, has quickly become a worldwide pandemic. During this time, it is likely pregnant women are feeling anxious or worried about how Covid-19 may affect them and their baby during their pregnancy journey.

This information sheet has been developed with the Midlands Maternity and Perinatal Mental Health Clinical Network and Maternity Voices Partnerships, to help support you with any concerns you may have during this uncertain time. It is important to remember to always follow the guidance and advice given to you by your health care professional about both your physical and emotional wellbeing.

#### **Q. Is it normal to feel different levels of anxiety and worry during this time?**

Many pregnant women, or women who have recently given birth, will be feeling increased levels of anxiety and worry as the situation around coronavirus develops. It is important to recognise these changes in emotions and seek help if this is becoming difficult to manage.

#### **Q. Is there anything I can do at home to support positive wellbeing?**

- Stay informed with key information, but try not to become overwhelmed by different news sources
- Try to keep to routine and healthy habits around sleep, healthy eating and exercise
- Use virtual ways to stay connected with your loved ones and those in similar circumstances, through telephone and video calling
- Talk about your feelings to the people around you. and find ways to focus on the things within your control
- Enjoy the hobbies you are still able to do that may help you relax, like reading, watching movies, needlework or games

- Take time to do what you want to do, like prepare the things for the baby, or getting things at home organised.

**Q. I am having particularly worrying thoughts, feel depressed or anxious, and feel I need more support?**

Always speak to your GP, midwifery or health visiting team if you feel you need help or support. They will be able to provide you with the right level of care you need during and after your pregnancy.

**There is also a number of organisations that offer mental health and wellbeing advice and guidance:**

<https://maternalmentalhealthalliance.org/resources/mums-and-families/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing/>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/looking-after-your-mental-health-during-coronavirus-outbreak>

<https://maternalocd.org/resources/>

**Q. I am feeling very mentally or emotionally unwell and I am unable to cope; how can I get urgent help?**

If you or someone you are concerned about is in crisis, despairing or suicidal, it is very important you seek help as soon as possible. If your usual health care professionals are unavailable and you feel your/their life is in danger, call the emergency services on 999.

Samaritans are also a 24-hour listening service in times of crisis.

<https://www.samaritans.org/> on 116 123 (free to call and will not appear on your phone bill), or email [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

**Q. I do not feel safe at home, and I am unsure what I can do?**

There may be many reasons that you feel unsafe at home, and it important to remember even during this time that you are not alone. The household isolation instruction as a result of coronavirus, does not apply if you need to leave your home to escape domestic abuse.

There is also help and support available to anyone experiencing or at risk of abuse, including police response, online support, helplines, refuges and other services.

<https://www.nationaldahelpline.org.uk/> or by calling 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247.

<https://www.womensaid.org.uk/covid-19-coronavirus-safety-advice-for-survivors/> (Please copy link into internet website browser or search women's aid Covid 19)

If you are in immediate danger, call 999 and ask for the police - the police will continue to respond to emergency calls. If you are calling from a mobile and feel you are unable to talk press 55. This only works on mobiles and does not allow police to track your location.

If you are in danger and unable to talk on the phone, dial 999, listen to the questions from the operator and respond by coughing or tapping the handset if you can. For more information, see the government website below for more guidance and support.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-and-domestic-abuse/coronavirus-covid-19-support-for-victims-of-domestic-abuse>