

Maternity

Mental health and emotional wellbeing after having a baby

Having a baby is an emotional time for both parents. People can feel different things, like happiness, excitement and hope, but they might feel tired, worried, or even sad.

Many women feel down, tearful, or anxious in the first few days after giving birth. This is called the "baby blues". It is common and usually goes away within 2 weeks. These feelings can make it harder to enjoy the first few days and can affect how parents feel about each other and their child.

Sometimes, new mums have mental health problems after giving birth, just like they could at other times in their lives. 1 in 5 women feel worried, anxious, or sad after their baby is born.

If you have a mental health problem, or have had one before, you might notice your symptoms getting stronger or coming back after your baby is born. Mental health problems are like any other illness, so it is important to talk to your midwife, health visitor or GP if you feel this way. There is lots of help, support and treatment available for you. This can include talking therapies, medication, self-help materials, and exercise.

Some women stop taking their medication when their baby is born without talking to a doctor first. This can make their symptoms worse. You should not change your medication without asking a doctor first.

There are medications that are safe to take while breast feeding. Please speak to your GP, midwife, mental health team or health visitor if you have any questions.



Patient Information

If you have a serious mental illness like schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorders, or have had a psychotic illness before, you might feel worse, or have your symptoms come back after your baby is born. This will need urgent treatment. A specialist perinatal mental health team or a community mental health team will watch over you closely and support you.

After your baby is born, you will be asked about how you feel at every visit. These questions are asked to all new mums. The maternity team supporting you might find that you are at risk of developing a mental health problem. If this happens, they will talk to you about ways to get support and treatment. They may suggest that you see a mental health team, a specialist midwife, a GP, or a health visitor. If you are worried about your thoughts, feelings, or behaviour, it is very important to ask for help.

You can find more information about mental health on these websites:
www.england.nhs.uk/mental.health/perinatal/
<https://linktr.ee/uhcwperinatalmentalhealth>

The Trust has access to interpreting and translation services. If you need this information in another language or format, please contact us on 02476 967315 and we will do our best to meet your needs.

The Trust operates a smoke free policy.

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Document History

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