

Emotional Health

During Pregnancy and After Birth



fernandez

Built for Birthing



Emotional health in pregnancy and after giving birth

Pregnancy and the period after childbirth are significant times of change in a woman's life. For some women, it can be very happy and exciting time. Others may have mixed or negative feelings about being pregnant. Some people think that they can't tell others about their feelings and they feel that it is unusual to have mixed or negative feelings.

One out of five women needs help with stress, anxiety or emotional problems during pregnancy and after childbirth. It is also believed that many other women suffer in silence.

Some women with previous mood disorders have a higher risk of relapse during pregnancy or after birthing, even if they have been well for a long time and have shown no symptoms during pregnancy. It is important that these women receive advice and specialist care.

Emotional health problems are more common than physical health problems in pregnancy and can affect up to 20% of women.



We are here to help!

We are a specialist team of counselling psychologists, midwives, nurses and obstetricians with a special interest in emotional wellbeing of pregnant women. We offer assessments, treatment, advice and support for women who have current or previous stress, anxiety or depression.

YOU CAN TAKE OUR HELP IF

- You are planning a pregnancy and need advice.
- You are pregnant or have given birth in the last six months, and have any feelings of worry or low mood

- You have a relapse of the previous mood disturbance in pregnancy or the first six months after birth.
- You have an emotional health issue for the first time in pregnancy or the first six months after birth.

COMMON WORRIES WHEN YOU ARE PREGNANT

- Changes in your role (becoming a mother, stopping work)
- Changes in your relationships
- Whether you will be a good parent
- Fear that there will be problems with the pregnancy or the baby
- Fear of childbirth
- Lack of support and being alone
- Physical changes that occur in pregnancy

WHEN YOU SHOULD ASK FOR HELP

- If you feel very emotional, tearful, irritable or anxious
- If you continue to feel down or don't enjoy activities as you used to
- Being more irritable than usual
- Withdrawing from relationships or activities
- Sleep problems not related to the baby's sleep pattern
- Having no energy and worrying a lot
- Thinking that your future is bleak
- Thoughts of harming yourself or your baby, or of ending your life

Asking for help to improve your emotional wellbeing at this time can be an important step towards a healthier pregnancy and a more comfortable birthing experience.

SOME WAYS YOU CAN HELP YOURSELF ARE

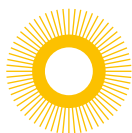
- Take a few minutes every day to do something you enjoy and devote a longer period each week to an enjoyable activity. Let family and friends help
- Do some physical activity that makes you a bit out of breath, for example, a brisk walk. Don't be afraid to continue with your normal exercise program. Eat a healthy balanced diet
- Try some relaxation techniques, such as mindfulness

WHAT WE OFFER

Talking therapies: you can talk to your primary consultant who will then guide you to a midwife, counsellor or psychologist, depending on the need. Talking to a professional can help you to come to terms with some changes you may be finding difficult.

You can also complete a questionnaire that the hospital provides to make sure that you are doing well emotionally.

Wishing you a happy, healthy pregnancy and birthing.



- If you need further support, please consult Dr Anita Rego, Counselling Psychologist, through your primary consultant.