

Postpartum mental health

Part 2



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Postpartum mental health *Part 2*

In part 2 of this series, we take a closer look at three serious mental health challenges that can afflict mothers shortly after giving birth:

- Postpartum depression
- Postpartum anxiety
- Postpartum psychosis

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Being aware of the signs and symptoms can be hugely important for moms as well as their friends and family members.



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Postpartum depression (PPD)

New moms may start to feel:

- incompetent and alone
- lacking focus and concentration
- constantly worrying
- just going through the motions
- not sure who they are anymore
- having racing and intrusive thoughts
- that their baby doesn't like them
- wishing they could run away



Postpartum depression (PPD)

If you said yes to one or more, it may help to reach out to a mental health professional, especially if the symptoms last longer than two weeks, feel like they are getting worse, or make it hard to complete everyday tasks.



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Postpartum anxiety

Some mothers experience severe anxiety after childbirth that interferes with their ability to function, including:

- obsessive and unrealistic worries about harm to their baby
- inability to focus or relax
- shortness of breath
- disrupted sleep
- upset stomach or loss of appetite
- repetitive checking of environment when there's no danger
- panic attacks



Postpartum anxiety

Just like with PPD, if you experience any of the listed symptoms, it may help to see a therapist or other mental health professional.

It's important to get help before anxiety intensifies and becomes harder to control.



Postpartum psychosis

Very rarely, a more severe condition develops within about the first week of delivery: postpartum psychosis.*

This includes symptoms such as feeling confused and lost, hallucinations and delusions, paranoia, and, in some cases, thoughts of self-harm.

**Approximately 1-2 in every 1,000 women experience this.*

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Postpartum psychosis

As it may lead to life-threatening thoughts or behaviors, it is important that moms experiencing these symptoms get help immediately.



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For immediate support

The Postpartum Support International HelpLine at 1-800-944-4773 is available from 7 a.m.-10 p.m. CT for non-emergency support.

If you are in crisis, please call your local emergency number or the *Suicide & Crisis Lifeline* at 988.

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