Toronto Public Health offers FREE non-crisis service for pregnant and new parents who are having emotional difficulties.

We can help
If you are pregnant or your baby is less than one year of age we provide:

- Telephone assessment
- Ongoing counselling
- Referrals to community programs
- Group support
- Free TTC tokens, snacks, and translators for group sessions

It is important to know that you are not alone and you are not to blame.

For more information or support:
Toronto Public Health
Call: 416-338-7600
E-chat: PublicHealth@toronto.ca
Search: Postpartum Depression at toronto.ca/health

There is help, you will get better!

Other Community and Partnership Programs offering support:

East Toronto Perinatal Adjustment Program (ETPAP) – (416) 469-7608 (east of Yonge St)

Scarborough Perinatal Support Network (SPSN) – (416) 338-7600 (Scarborough area)

Parkdale Queen West CHC, Maternal Support Program
(416) 537-8222 (west of Yonge St)

Fathers’ Mental Health Network
www.fathersmentalhealth.com
(416) 586-4800 Ext. 8325

Depression & Anxiety in Pregnancy and After Birth
Depressive & Anxiety Disorders in Pregnancy and After Birth

Depression and anxiety can occur anytime during pregnancy or after the birth of a baby. Feeling very depressed or anxious is not normal. Depression occurs in about 15% of women in pregnancy or after birth. Anxiety can be more common. Up to 80% of mothers feel very teary, irritable and worried for up to 10 days after delivery. These “baby blues” are very common and do not usually need treatment other than understanding, rest and support.

Who is more at risk for depression or anxiety?

Women who have:

- A history (or family history) of depression or anxiety
- A pregnancy or delivery complication
- Poor sleep
- Few supports (family, friends)
- Work or relationship stress
- Stopped medication used to treat depression or anxiety
- Early breastfeeding challenges

What is normal in pregnancy?

Low energy or changes in appetite or sleep can be normal in pregnancy and these symptoms may be confused with depression.

What symptoms should I watch for?

- Depressed or irritable mood
- Lack of interest in activities
- Changes in sleep or appetite
- Low energy or poor concentration
- Feeling guilty or worthless
- Worry that is difficult to control
- Feeling panicky, restless or tense
- Intrusive repetitive thoughts (e.g., fear of baby getting germs) or repeated rituals (e.g., hand washing, checking)
- Flashbacks or nightmares of a trauma
- Thoughts of suicide or harming yourself or your baby

Symptoms in pregnancy can lead to postpartum depression or anxiety.

Fathers can get depressed too...

Paternal depression affects 10% of men after the birth of a baby.

Why should I get help?

Symptoms can last for many months and lead to:

- Not taking care of yourself, your pregnancy or your baby
- Effects on the physical health of your pregnancy
- Trouble bonding with your baby
- Difficulty in relationships or work
- Using substances such as drugs or recreational alcohol
- Suicide

Postpartum psychosis is rare, but a medical emergency. Symptoms can include confusion, feeling paranoid, hearing voices, having unusual thoughts of harming yourself or your baby. It is okay to feel sad and stressed.

Here are things to do to take care of you:

- Take one day at a time
- Ask for help from your health care provider
- Share your feelings with your partner
- Sleep when you can
- Eat healthy foods and keep hydrated
- Plan one thing to look forward to every day
- Be active! Go outside for a walk
- Join a local support/parenting group

Source: Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre
Women’s Mood and Anxiety Clinic: Reproductive Transitions

You deserve to feel better