



Postnatal
Psychosis

Pandas Foundation

Pre And post Natal Depression Advice and Support

About Us

Pandas Foundation (Pre And postNatal Depression Advice and Support) has been set up to support individuals and their families who are living with Pre and Postnatal Depression.

Our primary focus is that no parent should feel alone when suffering depression, whether it is during pregnancy or following birth.

We aim to understand the individual behind the illness and give them the advice, guidance and support they need to help aid their recovery.

Pandas Foundation offers a variety of support services; website and online community, telephone help line, email and local support groups.

Why we are here

In the UK:

- 1 in 4 people will experience a mental health problem in any given year
- A number of studies indicate that 10-15 per cent of new mothers will experience Postnatal Depression
- Close to 90 per cent of those who die by suicide have a mental disorder. Of these suicides more than 60 per cent are thought to have been experiencing a depressive illness at the time

About Postnatal Psychosis

Postnatal Psychosis is also called Postpartum Psychosis and Puerperal Psychosis. This is a severe episode of mental illness. This affects 1 -2 in every 1000 deliveries. The illness itself is completely different to Postnatal Depression. It can be similar in some symptoms to bipolar disorder, and may take form of mania, severe depression with delusions, confusion or stupor, or rapid changes in mood between these extremes.

Symptoms

- Restless, excite or elated
- Unable to sleep
- Confused and disorientated
- Difficulty in relating to the environment or may fail to recognise friends or family.
- Might not be able to bond with your baby
- Delusions or hallucinations
- Manic behaviour (e.g. cleaning at 3am)
- Mood swings from high to low
- Losing touch with reality

Possible Causes

There is some evidence which shows that the condition can run in families which have previous history of mental health problems e.g. a diagnosis of bipolar disorder are at a higher risk of developing Postnatal Psychosis. However it can often appear with no warning and no specific cause. A number of factors may be a cause of Postnatal Psychosis, low self-esteem, lack of social and emotional support, feeling isolated and feeling inadequate as a mother.

Treatment

Admission to a specialist Mother and Baby unit, although these are not available in every area, the NHS can arrange a transfer to the nearest unit, allowing the best possible care for mother and child. It may be necessary to prescribe medication, to help treat postnatal psychosis. The mother may not be able to continue to breastfeed however seek advice from the Consult Psychiatrist to discuss the options. Mothers normally stay on the ward for around four to eight weeks depending on the symptoms; during this time nursing staff will help her build a relationship with her child. Mothers often feel detached from their child due to the symptoms of Postnatal Psychosis.

If a Mother and Baby unit are not available the Mother may stay on an Obstetrics ward to be cared for. Mother who experience Postnatal Psychosis will stay under care of the community mental health team and being discharged from the Mother and Baby unit. Normally with treatment Mothers begin to feel well after several months.



Tips for Postnatal Psychosis

- When your baby is sleeping try and get some sleep, if you can't just try and rest and relax by listening to music, reading or putting your feet up.
- If friends or family offer help try not to say no, don't try and be super women.
- Eat a balanced diet, don't try and eat very little to get your figure back. See our health living brochure for more info.
- Get some daily exercise by taking your push chair out for a bit (see health living)
- Talk to your partner or other members of your family about how you are feeling.
- Talk to Pandas Help Line on 0843 28 98 401.
- Write down how you are feeling.
- Plan some special time for yourself each day. This could be something as simple as a soak in a hot bath or time to read your book.
- Try to plan time with your partner and friends.
- Try to catch early warning signs of stress and anxiety
- Note down emergency contact numbers for help and support. For example the mother and baby unit you were at, out of hours GP and your GP number.
- Take one day at a time and set yourself small achievable goals.

Treatment for PND

Everyone can try the self-help guide to postnatal depression. If this is not enough, you might benefit from talking to your Health Visitor, midwife or GP. They can help by prescribing one of the following:

- Cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT)
- Psychological therapy
- Anti-depressants
- Admit you (admit yourself) to a mother and baby unit

Only a few women will need to go into hospital for treatment of postnatal psychosis. In that case, you should usually be admitted with your baby to a specialist Mother and Baby Unit.

Support available

Pandas Foundation offer a variety of support mechanisms including;



- Email Support - info@pandasfoundation.org.uk



- Website - www.pandasfoundation.org.uk



- Pandas Support Groups - Find your local group by visiting our website

Pandas Help Line

0843 28 98 401

Phone lines are open 9am till 8pm. Mon - Sun

Knowing where to find answers to your questions, or having someone outside the family to talk to who has experienced similar situations, can often make a real difference to life with pre or postnatal depression.

Pandas Foundation

Pre And post Natal Depression Advice and Support

Pandas Foundation 2012, Limited Company registered in England and Wales with company number 7740327 Registered office: 9 Grosvenor Green, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY1 3RF