

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

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



Prenatal
Depression

Pandas Foundation

Pre And post Natal Depression Advice and Support

What is prenatal (Ante) depression

Some women when they find out they are pregnant feel overwhelmed, they expect to feel happy, overjoyed, and blossom soon after but may find themselves asking 'I want this baby but why do I feel so down?' Signs of depression can often be similar to the emotions felt during pregnancy often making Prenatal depression hard to identify. Each woman is different, here are some of the symptoms for you to recognise if you are suffering from pre natal (antenatal) depression.

Prenatal depression has received less attention than postpartum/postnatal depression until recently. The incidence of women experiencing symptoms of a low mood, anxiety and depression during pregnancy is increasing and has become as much of a concern as postnatal depression (Bertrum 2008).

The transition to Motherhood is an extremely challenging time; the changes are significant and can affect her relationships with her partner, friends and family. Many women no longer receive the help and support from extended families due to the present changes in western society. These changes can also challenge her perceptions of her own body and cause identity issues. Therefore it is not surprising that a woman can experience a low mood or depression in pregnancy (Green 1998).

What causes prenatal depression

Pregnancy is physical and emotional change, hormone levels increase, body shape changes, can also find that the activities you liked to do before as hobbies or interests have to stop, these changes can cause us to feel a level of depression during the pregnancy. Pre natal depression can be triggered by a previous event in life such as bad parenting experiences.

Signs and symptoms

- Feeling tearful or sadness
- Difficulty handling social situations Feeling anxious
- Feeling irritable, angry or no energy
- Decrease or increase in appetite
- Severe fatigue or not wanting to get out of bed
- Difficulty leaving the house/ Feeling of isolation
- Lack of libido
- Difficulty sleeping
- Feeling uninterested in pregnancy
- Obsessive feelings

Treatment

Talk to your GP or midwife about how you are feeling, they will be able to assess whether you are suffering from prenatal depression. Your GP may recommend having counselling to help you come to terms with your emotions. Prevention of antenatal depression is preferable to treatment and dealing with the depression will reduce the incidence of postnatal depression developing.

Suggestions of preparation for Motherhood:

1. Are you psychologically prepared to take on Motherhood? What kind of parent do you think you will be? What are you looking forward to?

2. Explore your family history including your marital relationship and your relationship with your Mother. How do you want to Mother? Is this similar to the way you were Mothered or different? What are your fears?

3. Take your own needs seriously. Take care of yourself by seeking support early and anticipating your needs with housework. What do you need in order to Mother a child? What will you be giving up? What will you gain?

4. Share concerns as a couple. Discord and unwanted pregnancy will both contribute to stress and is a key factor in postnatal depression. Do you feel supported by your partner?

5. Seek professional help early if needed especially if depression has been a long standing issue. Becoming a Mother is an underestimated life change.

6. Talking through issues with your partner, family or friends is a good source of emotional support.

7. Call Pandas Help Line for a confidential and friendly way to talk about your feeling and any concerns.

Can postnatal depression be prevented

We don't know enough about PND to prevent it in the first place. The following suggestions seem sensible and may help to keep you well

- Do make friends with other women who are pregnant a good place to meet is antenatal classes or women who have just had a baby
- Do find someone you feel you can talk to
- Do inform your GP and your health visitor if you have had depression before or if you feel signs of depression in pregnancy.
- Do make sure that you have treatment for depression in pregnancy. This may be a talking therapy or medication.

Check our website for more prevention ideas

