

## How to help others?

- Just listen
- Provide welcoming and non judgemental environments
- Check in on friends and colleagues
- Inform peers and colleagues about information, campaigns and services
- Don't feel like you have to have all the answers



### Contact us

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Charity No: 116301



## Perinatal and postnatal mental health





At HEH Mind we work to promote good mental health within our locality. We seek to support and empower people to lead a full life as part of their local community. Our services include

- Adult wellbeing
- Family wellbeing
- Children and young peoples wellbeing
- Training and workplace wellbeing
- Advocacy
- Volunteering
- Anti stigma/ discrimination campaigning
- Fund and awareness raising

HEH Mind services and support are available across the Havant Borough and East Hampshire District, including areas such as: Hayling Island, Waterloooville, Emsworth, Petersfield, Alton, Bordon and Bentley. Further details regarding the services at HEH Mind can be found in our 'About us' booklet.

## Different symptoms

You can experience any kind of mental health problems/ symptoms during and after pregnancy, but there are some that are particularly common or are specifically linked to pregnancy and childbirth.

This information covers:

- Perinatal depression
- Perinatal anxiety
- Perinatal OCD
- Perinatal and postpartum eating behaviours
- Postpartum psychosis
- Postpartum PTSD

You can find more information about symptoms and illnesses on the Mind website, [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)



## Who else could help?

Action Postpartum Psychosis (APP) - [app-network.org](http://app-network.org)

Anxiety UK—[anxietyuk.org.uk](http://anxietyuk.org.uk)

The Association for Post Natal Illness— [apni.org](http://apni.org)

Birth trauma association—[birthtraumaassociation.org.uk](http://birthtraumaassociation.org.uk)

The Breastfeeding Network— [breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk](http://breastfeedingnetwork.org.uk)

Family Lives - [familylives.org.uk](http://familylives.org.uk)

Fatherhood Institute—[fatherhoodinstitute.org](http://fatherhoodinstitute.org)

The Lullaby Trust - [lullabytrust.org.uk](http://lullabytrust.org.uk)

Maternal OCD - [maternalocd.org](http://maternalocd.org)

Miscarriage Association - [miscarriageassociation.org.uk](http://miscarriageassociation.org.uk)

Netmums - [netmums.com](http://netmums.com) No Panic— [nopanic.org.uk](http://nopanic.org.uk)

OCD Action - [ocdaction.org.uk](http://ocdaction.org.uk)

PANDAS - [pandasfoundation.org.uk](http://pandasfoundation.org.uk)

PND & Me—[pndandme.co.uk](http://pndandme.co.uk) Sands - [sands.org.uk](http://sands.org.uk)

Tommy's - [tommys.org](http://tommys.org)



## Support and services

It's important to ask for help because you don't need to cope with these difficult experiences alone. There are many health professionals who you can talk to about your mental health, and who can provide you with support in several different ways. These may include general health and pregnancy support services like:

- Your GP
- Antenatal care (with your midwife or obstetrician)
- Your health visitor

There are also more specialist services to support you if you are at risk of becoming (or become) more unwell:

- Perinatal mental health services
- Community mental health teams (CMHTs) and crisis teams
- Hospitals, and mother and baby units (MBUs)

You can also access support and services through:

- Voluntary organisations and charities



# Maternal wellbeing

Having a baby is a big life event, and it's natural to experience a range of emotions and reactions during and after your pregnancy. But if they start to have a big impact on how you live your life, you might be experiencing a mental health problem.

Around one in five women will experience a mental health problem during pregnancy or in the year after giving birth. This might be a new mental health problem or another episode of a mental health problem you've experienced before. These are known as perinatal mental health problems.

It can be really difficult to feel able to talk openly about how you're feeling when you become a new parent. You might feel:

- Pressure to be happy and excited
- Like you have to be on top of everything
- Worried you're a bad parent if you're struggling with your mental health
- Worried that your baby will be taken away from you if you admit how you're feeling

But it's important to ask for help or support if you need it. You're likely to find that many new mothers are feeling the same way.

# Your partners

Studies suggest that partners can also experience perinatal mental health problems. For example, studies into postnatal depression in fathers suggest that around one in five men experience depression after becoming fathers. Partners might develop a mental health problem when becoming a parent for similar reasons to mothers, particularly if you:

- Are a young parent without good support networks in place
- Have experienced abuse in your childhood
- Are struggling with stressful life events, like moving house, losing your job or being bereaved
- Have poor living conditions or are living in poverty

You might also be coping with:

- Extra responsibilities around the house
- Financial pressures
- A changing relationship with your partner
- Lack of sleep

If your partner is also experiencing a mental health problem, this can make it even harder for you to cope with the normal struggles of becoming a parent.

## Build your support network

Talking to other new mothers and fathers, and finding that other new parents share the anxieties and frustrations you are experiencing, can be very reassuring. It can also give you a chance to share skills and experiences, to realise that you are not alone and, above all, to get some emotional and practical support. It can help to affirm you in your new role. You could:

- Go to local parent and baby groups
- Contact specialist organisations
- Access online support
- Try peer support



## Managing existing illnesses

If you become pregnant, or are planning to become pregnant, it's important to think about how you can manage your mental health during this time.

Whatever your feelings are about being pregnant or becoming a parent, this can be a stressful time for everyone.

Talk to your doctor as soon as possible. They will be able to help you make plans to manage your mental health during pregnancy.

## Manage daily tasks

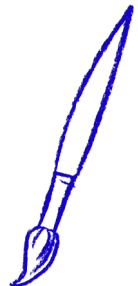
Coping with household tasks as well as looking after a new baby is a challenge for anyone. Finding some ways to manage them day-to-day can help take the pressure off and help you feel more able to cope with the symptoms of your mental health problem.

- Accept help
- Cook meals in advance
- Take it slowly
- Don't pressure yourself

## Look after yourself

Finding time to think about yourself while looking after your baby may feel like a challenge, but making small changes can help you look after your mental health.

- Keep active
- Try to get some sleep (we know this one maybe hard)
- Take time to relax



## Did you know?

- Mental health illness affects 1 in 4 every year in the UK.
- Approximately 20% of women will experience a mental health problem during pregnancy or in the year after giving birth.
- Tokophobia is a particular anxiety about childbirth.
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) could be affected by birth trauma.
- 303 people in Hampshire took their own life between 2014-16. That's nearly 2 a week.

## Services and support

HEH Mind services and support are available across the Havant Borough and East Hampshire District, including areas such as: Hayling Island, Waterloo, Emsworth, Petersfield, Alton, Bordon and Bentley. We also have some services that are available across Hampshire.

Importantly we are a different charity to National Mind, so if you choose to fundraise or promote our services, you need to select or name 'Havant and East Hants Mind' to raise awareness and or funds for our local service provision.

