

My pregnancy & post-birth wellbeing plan



Boots
Family Trust

This plan is to help you prepare the support you might need to look after your mental health. While coping with the physical changes in pregnancy, birth and beyond, your emotional health is important too. Many women feel anxious, unhappy, mentally distressed, depressed or even more severely mentally unwell during this time, which can be unexpected.

This plan is to help you think about the support you might need to look after your mental health and wellbeing. It is your decision whether to share it with anyone else

How am I feeling?

Take a moment to write about how you feel now, your thoughts about the birth and how you feel about your baby.



You may have mixed emotions about your pregnancy and your baby. This is completely normal. Here are some common signs that you should talk through with your midwife or health visitor:

- Tearfulness
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Being irritable/arguing more often
- Lack of concentration
- Change in appetite
- Problems sleeping or extreme energy
- Racing thoughts
- Feeling more anxious
- Lack of interest in usual things

Some women can also have:

- Intrusive thoughts
- Suicidal thoughts
- Strict rituals and obsessions
- Lack of feelings for their baby

Talking about how you are feeling helps you get through the exciting yet challenging time of becoming a parent. It doesn't matter who you talk to, but it is worth having someone in mind that you can trust and who can support you if needed. One of the first steps to getting better is knowing and accepting that you are unwell.

Often your friends and family will spot that things aren't quite right before you do.

I will ask
and talk to them about things troubling me.*

Also, ask yourself...

Am I the sort of person who accepts that I'm unwell?



How might I start the conversation if I feel embarrassed?

Who else can I turn to if I don't feel listened to or supported?



* You may want to share this Wellbeing Plan with them

Being prepared: help and support

Finding support can be tricky, especially if you are on your own. Starting to look at local activities and groups during your pregnancy can be a good way to meet new friends and mums in your area. Look in the local children's centre and on the Netmums website for antenatal classes, baby massage, antenatal and postnatal exercise groups, new mums groups and so on.

It is never too early to start meeting other pregnant women and new mums, or being active to support your mental health.

The following groups/classes are local to me:

Ways to cope: what might appeal to me?

- Talking to someone I trust about how I feel, such as a parent, sibling, partner or trusted friend
- Talking to my midwife or health visitor about how I feel
- Keeping active
- Having a healthy diet
- Finding out about different ways to relax, such as yoga, meditation
- Asking for help with things at home, like chores and babysitting
- Asking for support if I am worried about my baby
- Finding out about how to change my thinking patterns
- Discussing the possibility of counselling or medication with my GP
- Keeping a journal of my feelings though pregnancy and beyond

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Who could I ask if I need help with practicalities, such as shopping, tidying up and babysitting?

People I can call on are:

- For more info and a full list of support organisations, national and local, visit www.netmums.com/pnd or ring the Tommy's FREE PregnancyLine on 0800 0147800
- Find more information on mental wellbeing in pregnancy at www.tommys.org/mentalhealth, including finding out when to look for help, what will happen when you look for help and stories from women who have experienced difficulties and how they were helped.

Remember...

- Feeling emotionally unwell is common. It is nothing to be embarrassed about.
- Talking about it is the best first step in getting the right support.
- It can happen to anyone, whether you have a history of mental illness or not.
- If you have suffered before, it doesn't mean it will happen again.
- Being prepared can make a big difference, so you've taken the first step by using this plan

Record contact details here of a professional who should be able to help you or let you know of other support available if you are concerned about how you are feeling.

Midwife:

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Health visitor:

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GP:

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Other:

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V2. Published: July 2016
Review date: Oct 2019
Send feedback to
mailbox@tommys.org



Endorsed by the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and the Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP)
Find out more at <http://bit.ly/1BZpboR>