

# HOW DEPRESSION AND ANXIETY CAN SOMETIMES AFFECT NEW MUMS.

You're not alone. Speak to your Health Visitor or GP if you're worried or not feeling yourself.



Having a baby is a big life event, and it's natural to experience a range of emotions during and after your pregnancy. But if it all starts to have a big impact on how you live your life and you don't quite feel like yourself anymore then you may have postnatal depression or anxiety.

## How depression or anxiety might make you feel

Depression and anxiety can be can be exhausting and frightening. You may feel worried about the future or overly concerned about your baby's health. It may affect your appetite, your sleep and your concentration. For some women the feelings are quite mild, for others they are overwhelming.

## You're not alone

Depression and anxiety are common, but some mums try to hide how they feel because they worry that people will think they aren't coping with their baby. Everyone needs some help from time to time. Your GP and health visitor will do all they can to support you and your baby together.

## Talk about it

Talk to your midwife, health visitor or GP (you may want to talk to your partner, friend or a member of your family first). The earlier you open up to them, the sooner you'll be on the road to recovery.

## Self-help

Talking to others can be a great help. You can share your feelings with other mums who are dealing with depression or anxiety, or who have gone through it in the past. Your health visitor can put you in touch with a local group or service.

## Medical treatment

Some mums can be helped by taking medicine for anxiety or depression. If you and your GP decide that this is the best course of action it can go hand-in-hand with counselling and you can usually still breastfeed your baby if you wish.

## Had problems before?

If you've had problems with your mental health in the past, let your midwife, GP or health visitor know. They can help reduce the chances of it coming back again after your baby is born.

**"If you are struggling to speak to your GP, maybe a partner or someone close to you could pick up the phone and make that initial contact. There's lots of help available."**

Lesley Weir, Family Nurse Partnership

**"I hid it from everyone for too long. When I finally realised that I couldn't keep going on my own I felt a sense of relief. You only start getting better when you admit to yourself that you're not feeling right."**

Ellie mum of 2, Edinburgh