

# A NEW BABY IN THE FAMILY!

Having a new baby in the family brings worries for both parents and it is natural to become focussed on wanting to build a safe nest for your family.

Of course it is normal to feel anxious and worried about things at the moment. But more severe or prolonged feelings of depression are not normal and could be a sign of depression or anxiety.

These days mental health issues are much better understood and there's lots of support for parents who are struggling emotionally – "it's OK to not be OK", the important thing is to tell someone.

Mental health problems happen to anyone – just like physical health problems. The signs of antenatal anxiety or depression can be different for each parent. Trust your instincts, only you will really know.

On the back cover you will find some of the signs and symptoms of antenatal anxiety to watch out for.

# SIGNS OF ANTENATAL ANXIETY

- Panic attacks (a racing heart, palpitations, shortness of breath, shaking or feeling physically 'detached' from your surroundings)
- Abrupt mood swings
- Feeling constantly sad, low, or crying for no obvious reason
- Being nervous, 'on edge', or panicky
- Feeling constantly tired and lacking energy
- Losing interest in intimacy
- Being easily annoyed or irritated
- Finding it difficult to focus, concentrate or remember (people with depression sometimes describe this as a 'brain fog')
- Doing risky things, or relying too much on alcohol or using drugs to feel okay



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Bwrdd Iechyd Prifysgol  
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# G-PIMHS

## Looking After You, To Look After Your Baby



## BEING A PARENT CAN BE HARD

Being a parent can be very hard at times so it's important that you look after your mental wellbeing to feel happy and confident so you can handle the ups and downs, whilst still being the parent you want to be.

This is important for dads and partners too. Being a parent is life changing, and at the moment it seems life has been turned upside down for many.

Protecting your mental wellbeing isn't just about reducing your risk of more serious antenatal and postnatal depression and anxiety, it is about looking after yourself, so you can look after your baby.

There are a number of things you can do which can help your mental wellbeing during pregnancy and beyond. Don't ignore the causes of your stress and anxiety or brush them under the carpet. Instead, pinpoint the things that make you feel stressed or anxious, and try to make a plan for dealing with them differently

## MAINTAINING GOOD MENTAL WELLBEING

These things can help maintain good mental wellbeing both during, and after pregnancy:

- Talk about how you feel with your partner, friends or family members. It can help you feel positive and cope better with stress
- Don't expect too much of yourself –be realistic about what you can do.
- Rest when you need to
- Eat regular, healthy meals
- Make time for yourself if you can, do the things you enjoy
- Make connections with other parents online.
- Maintain your relationships with your friends and family members. If possible, set aside the time for a chat / facetime.
- Keep active -exercise helps our bodies deal with stress, and it triggers chemicals in the brain that improve our mood
- Try not to make major changes
- Avoid using drugs or alcohol to deal with stress
- Accept help if it's offered to you; ask for help if you need it

## IF YOU FEEL LONELY AND ISOLATED!

Let someone know. In every area there will now be a responsive support team that you can contact, who will be able to offer you direct support and put you in touch with other support and resources.

Your Health Visiting Team will have contact details.

In such unique circumstances, there is a lot to be anxious about but it is important to remember:

- Don't overload yourself with excessive media coverage
- Make time to relax
- Plan a daily self-care routine
- Be playful, be creative or just enjoy listening to music, watching TV, reading
- Make time to play with your baby
- There will be little moments in each day for you to enjoy

Other useful contacts: Your GP, NHS Direct Wales, Mind, Unicef, SamaritansHafal, NSPCC, Childline, Cyfannol