

# Maternal Mental Health

Conditions like postpartum depression (PPD), anxiety, psychosis and obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) are among the most common complications of pregnancy and childbirth. One in five new and expecting parents are impacted, making mental health the leading underlying cause of maternal deaths. Yet many struggle silently with the conditions known generally as Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMAD). Mental wellness is vital to the well-being of birthing people and their children. It is critically important to destigmatize these conditions and support those in need.

## A Path To Recovery

Almost everyone who experiences PMAD can recover, as most conditions are temporary and treatable. A combination of the following strategies can make a huge impact. Getting treatment sooner is better.

- **Self-Care:** Consistent sleep, a balanced diet, and exercise are essential to recover from the physical and emotional toll of pregnancy and childbirth.
- **Peer and Social Support:** Many people feel isolated or lonely during this time. Support from friends, family, doulas, and postpartum groups is crucial.
- **Therapy and Counseling:** These offer safe and supportive environments to explore feelings, challenges and experiences related to parenthood.
- **Medication:** Doctors can prescribe safe and effective treatments to manage mood and painful thoughts.

## How You Can Help

- **Volunteer your time** to assist a parent in need: It can be emotional support, preparing meals, or sharing information and resources.
- **Share personal stories** or experiences to end stigma and raise awareness.
- **Educate yourself:** Learn more about maternal mental health to better support the afflicted.



**75% of people suffering maternal mental health disorders are untreated, increasing the risk of long-term negative impacts on themselves and their families.**



**Low-income individuals and people of color (POC) are more likely to experience PMAD and are less likely to access care.**



**It's not just mothers: Up to 10% of new fathers experience postpartum depression or anxiety.**



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**If you or someone you know is struggling, call or text the  
National Maternal Mental Health Hotline at 1-833-TLC-MAMA (833-852-6262)  
for support and resources**

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