

## Understanding Antenatal Depression

Having antenatal depression does not necessarily mean you will develop postnatal depression. Many mums do feel well once their baby is born and having help and support as soon as possible makes all the difference.

### Useful contacts:-

House of Light 0800 043 2031 or 01482 580499  
Mon - Friday 9am - 5pm

Crisis Pregnancy Centre Hull 01482 492929

Pregnancy loss: Miscarriage association 01924 200799

Previous difficult birth? [www.birthtraumaassociation.org.uk](http://www.birthtraumaassociation.org.uk)



house of light

Offering hope and support for women affected by Postnatal Depression

Ignite Centre, Linnaeus Street, Hull HU3 2QA

Telephone: 0800 043 2031  
Email: [help@pndsupport.co.uk](mailto:help@pndsupport.co.uk)  
Website: [www.pndsupport.co.uk](http://www.pndsupport.co.uk)

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baby's coming  
and i'm not feeling  
quite right...

Understanding Antenatal Depression

You are not alone

# Antenatal Depression

This leaflet is to help you understand more about Antenatal Depression and what can be done to help.

Pregnancy is a time of many changes for a woman. Some women may find the changes and uncertainties that pregnancy can bring more difficult to manage than others. For some, pregnancy can be happy and exciting and for some mums they may have mixed or negative feelings about pregnancy, birth and becoming a mother.

## Common worries for mums to be:

- Fear that there will be problems with the pregnancy or the baby
- Change in your role (becoming a mum, stopping work)
- Will I be a good parent?
- Change in your relationship with your partner
- Fear of childbirth
- Lack of support and being alone
- Will I be able to manage?

## Who is at risk of developing Antenatal Depression?

If you have ever suffered from the following, even if you are currently feeling well, you should be referred to a Mental Health Team so you can be supported through your pregnancy.

- Schizophrenia
- Bipolar disorder
- Psychosis
- Severe Postnatal Depression
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder
- Anorexia or Bulimia
- Anxiety disorder
- Previous depression and/or anxiety



## Other risk factors include:

- Unplanned pregnancy
- Problems in the pregnancy – i.e Hyperemesis (severe sickness), Symphysis Pubis Dysfunction (SPD)
- Previous traumatic labour or delivery
- Stressful major life event e.g a relationship breakdown, job change or unemployment, moving house, bereavement, previous pregnancy loss, miscarriage or stillbirth

## Symptoms:

- Feeling low, tearful or crying
- Problems with sleep – tired all the time or feeling exhausted even when you have had rest\*
- No interest in things that you used to enjoy
- Loss of confidence
- Loss of appetite or comfort eating \*
- Difficulty concentrating and making decisions
- Anxiety, feeling nervous, on edge
- Panic attacks
- Irritability
- Lack of energy and motivation
- Feeling guilt & shame about how you feel
- Feelings of hopelessness
- Not caring about your appearance or surroundings at home
- Negative thoughts

\* **Please note** Some symptoms of depression can also be caused by pregnancy. For example loss of appetite due to nausea, feeling tired, disturbed sleep and loss of energy can be normal pregnancy symptoms.



## What can be done to help?

- Talking about how you feel really can help. If you have worries or concerns about your pregnancy and birth please talk to your Midwife, Health Visitor, Consultant or GP. It is really important that you attend for your antenatal care and appointments.
- Find time each week to do something you enjoy or that makes you feel relaxed.
- Avoid alcohol - Alcohol is not recommended in pregnancy and actually makes depression worse.
- Gentle regular exercise can really boost our mood, swimming or walking is good also yoga can be very relaxing.
- Eating regularly - not eating at all can make our mood worse. Little and often is the key if nausea is a problem.
- Talking Treatments - Counselling can be very effective.
- Try not to avoid people - Accept any offers of help from friends or family.
- In severe cases it may be necessary to have or continue with your medication. This should be discussed with your Doctor or Consultant or Mental Health Team. It is important that if you are already taking medication that you do not stop your medication suddenly.

There are other sources of help and support available this can vary for different areas please ask your Midwife or Health Visitor for further information.

We are with you every step of the way!

