

Maternal Mental Health

Overview

- What is Maternal Mental Health?
- The statistics
- What are the signs and symptoms?
- How does MMH affect mothers and families?
- Resources
- Looking after yourself

Myths

10 myths about parenthood and mental health



Read more about maternal mental health myths here: www.nct.org/MMHmyths

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What is Maternal Mental Health?

- Often referred to as Perinatal Mental Health refers to a woman's mental health during pregnancy and the first year after birth. This includes mental illness existing before pregnancy, as well as illnesses that develop for the first time, or are greatly exacerbated in the perinatal period.
- Examples of perinatal mental illness include **antenatal depression, postnatal depression, anxiety, perinatal obsessive compulsive disorder, postpartum psychosis and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**. These illnesses can be mild, moderate or severe, requiring different kinds of care or treatment.

Prevalence of Mental Health in the Perinatal Period

- More than one in ten women develop a mental illness during this time and if untreated these illnesses can have a devastating impact on women and their families.
- Worldwide about 10% of pregnant women and 13% of women who have just given birth experience a mental disorder, primarily depression. In developing countries this is even higher, i.e. 15.6% during pregnancy and 19.8% after child birth.

What to look out for

Sad and low
Tearful for no apparent
reason
Worthless
Hopeless about the Future
Tired
Unable to cope

Irritable and angry
Guilty
Lose concentration
Disturbed sleep
Reduced appetite
Lack interest in sex
Have thoughts about
death

How does MMH affect mothers and families?

- When a woman has mental health difficulties, as well as the adverse effects for her, there is an increased risk of adverse outcomes for their baby throughout life and for their partners.
- Suffering with PND can also place stress upon intimate relationships, and there is evidence to show a moderate correlation between maternal and paternal depression that occurs in the postnatal period.
- Children of mothers with anxiety and depression in the postnatal period are 50% more likely to have developmental delay.

E-learning module

- **Module One: Understanding maternal mental health**
- **Module Two: Maternal mental health: the woman's journey**
- <http://www.knowledge.scot.nhs.uk/maternalhealth/learning/maternal-mental-health.aspx>

Looking after yourself

Things I can do

.....by myself

.....with others

People I can talk to.....