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Maternal Mental Health Workbook

HELPING YOU NAVIGATE
THE JOURNEY OF PARENTHOOD

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welcome

As you embark on the incredible journey of parenthood, it's essential to prioritize your mental well-being just as much as your physical health. This worksheet is designed to offer you insights into postpartum and perinatal depression, provide valuable resources for seeking help, and highlight key risk factors to be aware of during this significant life transition.

Becoming a parent is a joyous and transformative experience, but it also comes with its unique set of challenges. From the sleepless nights to the overwhelming responsibility of caring for a newborn, it's normal to feel a wide range of emotions during this time. However, it's crucial to recognize when these feelings may be indicative of something more serious, such as postpartum or perinatal depression.

Throughout this workbook, you'll find practical tools and strategies to help you navigate the complexities of maternal mental health. Whether you're a first-time parent or adding to your family, taking proactive steps to safeguard your emotional well-being is essential for both you and your baby.

Remember, you're not alone on this journey. There are resources and support networks available to help you through any challenges you may face. By equipping yourself with knowledge and support, you can ensure a smoother transition into parenthood and prioritize your mental health every step of the way.

Let's embark on this journey together and empower ourselves to thrive during this transformative time in our lives.

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About TherapyWorks

At TherapyWorks, we're on a mission to help people when it matters most – because when you feel better, you live better.

As a company that cares, we're committed to therapy that works – for kids, teens, and adults. Whether you're facing everyday emotions, overwhelming distress, or life's unexpected – you're in the right place. Through clinical best practices and proven expertise, our therapists are dedicated to professional excellence and confident care.

Since 2009, everything we do is in support of our local community and people like you. When life gets hard, finding help shouldn't be your struggle. We'll get you connected with a best-fit therapist, so you can make sense of what's going on, create meaningful change, and get real results.

With three convenient locations in Downtown Los Gatos, Scotts Valley, and Capitola, TherapyWorks is your trusted, local counseling practice – We live here. We work here. We help here.

For additional resources, or to learn more about the team and our practice, visit mytherapyworks.com.

Changing lives since 2009.



What Is Maternal Mental Health

Before we dive in, let's first clarify two essential definitions: **perinatal depression**, which refers to mood disorders experienced during pregnancy and up to one year after childbirth, and **postpartum depression**, specifically occurring within the first year after giving birth.

Risk Factors for Perinatal/Postpartum Depression

These are some of the factors that put people at a greater risk for experiencing perinatal/postpartum depression.

- Smoking
- Lack of social support
- Poor relationship quality
- Unintended pregnancy
- Pregnancy complications
- Having twins, triplets or other multiples
- Your baby has health problems or other special needs
- A change in hormone levels after childbirth
- Having a baby who cries more than usual, is hard to comfort, or whose sleep and hunger needs are irregular and hard to predict
- Medical complications
- Personal or family history of depression, bipolar disorder, or mental illness
- Depression during pregnancy
- History of physical or sexual abuse
- Maternal anxiety
- Race/ethnicity - Women of color are more likely to experience PPD
- Life stress and stressful life events - illness, job loss, domestic violence, death of a loved one
- Other factors - Low socioeconomic status, chronic illness, genetic and epigenetic markers, cultural factors, vitamin D insufficiency

List any of your risk factors and be sure to share this information with your doctor.



Postpartum Depression vs. “Baby Blues”

Here are the main indicators that your postpartum symptoms are more than "baby blues."

"BABY BLUES"	POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION
<p>Peak in first few days, resolve within 2 weeks</p> <p>Mild symptoms that do not impact Mom's ability to care for self or baby</p> <p>Symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mild mood changes • Feelings of worry • Tearfulness/Sadness • Irritability • Sleep difficulties • Anxiety 	<p>Can start during pregnancy and up to 1 year after birth of baby, can persist for months to years if untreated</p> <p>Severe and persistent symptoms that interfere with daily activities and Mom's ability to care for self and baby</p> <p>Symptoms:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sad, anxious most of day, everyday, ≥ 2 wks • Hopelessness, helplessness • Lost of interest, pleasure • Restless, difficulty concentrating • Sleep difficulty, abnormal appetite changes, thoughts of self harm • Trouble bonding with baby

List any of your symptoms and be sure to share this information with your doctor.



Resources

Here's a list of resources and treatment considerations that can help if you experience perinatal or postpartum depression. Choose a helpful spot to keep this list of resources so it's in sight and easily accessible.

RESOURCES

Websites:

- Postpartum Support International - PSI www.postpartum.net
- Maternal Mental Health (ca.gov)
<https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CFH/DMCAH/Pages/Communications/Maternal-Mental-Health.aspx>
- Resources for Providers — [Policy Center for Maternal Mental Health](#)
- [The Blue Dot Project](#) www.thebluedotproject.org/
- [Check on Mom](#) www.mycheckonmom.com

Books:

- [Recommended Reads](#) from Postpartum Support International (PSI)

Help Lines

- Call 1-833-TLC-MAMA (1-833-852-6262). The National Maternal Health Hotline provides 24/7, free, confidential support before, during, and after pregnancy.
- Call or text "HELP" to 1-800-944-4773. The Postpartum Support International Hotline provides information, encouragement, and names of resources near you.
- Ask for help. Don't be afraid to ask for help from family and friends, whether it's caring for the baby or doing household chores.



Treatment Considerations

Here's a list of treatment considerations to discuss with a professional.

TREATMENT CONSIDERATIONS TO DISCUSS WITH A PROFESSIONAL

Therapy

- Talk therapy, cognitive behavior therapy, etc.
- Parent-child therapy

Pharmacological

- Antidepressants: Tricyclic antidepressants associated with low risk of toxic effects over SSRIs during pregnancy/breastfeeding
 - Considered when moderate to severe symptoms are not responding to psychotherapy

Social Supports and Psychoeducational Interventions

- Support groups for mothers/new parents; parent-child groups
- Home visiting interventions
- Partner support - including partner in treatment

Postpartum Sleep

- Screening for sleep quality and quantity: Postpartum sleep deprivation can significantly impact on a mom's physical and mental health and put her at a higher risk of postpartum depression and anxiety. And postpartum depression and anxiety can interrupt sleep.

Protective Factors

One of the best protective factors is to have a positive support system - people that you have a clear line of communication with to share how you are feeling and if you need more support.

List 3 friends/family/practitioners/clinicians that are part of your support system.



We Help People Like You

Whenever you're ready, here are ways we can help

- ▶ Schedule an appointment. The process is simple.



1

Schedule a Session

When life gets hard, TherapyWorks can help. Call, email, or visit our website. Our Client Care Coordinator will answer your questions and schedule an initial appointment.



2

Meet Your Therapist

Next, you'll connect with a best-fit therapist to share your concerns, discuss your goals for therapy, and create a personalized care plan to support you and your lifestyle.



3

Feel Better + Live Better

As a company that cares, we are committed to therapy that works. Together, you will experience meaningful change and real results when it matters most.

- ▶ Read our blog articles at mytherapyworks.com/blog
- ▶ Email us at hello@mytherapyworks.com
- ▶ Call us at 408-508-6789 or 831-525-5000
- ▶ Follow us on Instagram and Facebook @mytherapyworks

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Capitola Office

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Capitola, CA 95010
▶ 831.525.5000

Telehealth Support

Virtual sessions available throughout California
▶ mytherapyworks.com