

Parental Mental Health Checklist

If you or your partner are experiencing any of the following symptoms, it is recommended to discuss your concerns ASAP with a care provider.

Perinatal mental illnesses are temporary and treatable with care.

Check off any and all of the following points that apply to your situation and discuss them with your care provider.

Risk Factors for Mental Illness

- Previous history of depression, anxiety, OCD, bipolar disorder, psychosis, or perinatal mental illness.
- History of, or currently experiencing trauma such as domestic violence, verbal abuse, sexual abuse, poverty, loss of a parent.
- Stressful events in the past ~24 months such as a move, job loss, divorce, relationship challenges, or death of a loved one.
- Being a single parent.
- Not having a supportive partner, family members, or community.

Signs & Symptoms of Perinatal Mental Illness

- I can't sleep, even when my baby is sleeping.
- I have lost my appetite.
- I feel sad.
- I have been crying a lot for no reason.
- I am feeling worried or anxious most of the time.
- I am having anger or rage that is not normal for me.
- I feel numb or disconnected from my life.
- I don't feel like I'm bonding with my baby.
- I am having scary "what if" thoughts over & over about harm coming to my baby, myself, or others. (AKA Intrusive thoughts - a sign of postpartum OCD)
- I feel a lot of guilt and shame.
- I'm worried that I'm not a good enough parent.
- I feel overwhelmed with all of the things in my life.
- I can't concentrate or stay focused on things.
- I feel like I'm losing it or myself.
- I just want to be alone all or most of the time.
- My thoughts are always racing.
- I can't sit still.
- I feel like the only way to feel better is by using/abusing alcohol, prescription drugs, or other substances.
- I wonder if my baby and/or my family would be better off without me or my baby.
- I've been having physical symptoms that are not normal for me (eg. migraines, backaches, stomach aches, shortness of breath, panic attacks, chest pain)
- I have had passing or serious thoughts of harming myself or others.
- I have had thoughts that I should or need to hurt my baby, myself, or others.
- I am worried that I'm seeing or hearing things that other people don't see or hear.
- I'm afraid to be alone with my baby or by myself.
- I feel very concerned or paranoid that other people might hurt me or my family.

This checklist is not intended to diagnose any mental illness. It is a discussion tool for parents to use with their health care providers. It is based off the "New Mom Mental Health Checklist" by the Postpartum Progress organization.