

# Perinatal Depression / Postpartum Depression

Categories : [Children and Families](#), [First Time Mothers](#), [Health Issues](#), [Mental Health Care](#)

## WHAT IS PERINATAL DEPRESSION?

Depression that occurs during pregnancy or within a year after delivery is called perinatal depression. Hormone changes or other possible triggers such as a stressful life event can cause chemical changes in the brain that lead to depression. Health care providers may fail to recognize depression during pregnancy because signs of depression, such as feeling tired, sleep problems, emotional changes and weight gain, may also occur with pregnancy. Women with perinatal depression usually experience some of the following symptoms:

- Feeling sad, hopeless and overwhelmed
- Difficulty concentrating
- Sleep problems
- Feeling restless or irritable
- Crying a lot
- Anxiety
- Loss of interest or pleasure in activities
- Having no energy or motivation
- Change in eating habits-weight loss/weight gain
- Feelings of guilt or worthlessness

## WHAT IS POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION?

Postpartum depression can occur anytime in the first year after birth. Women with PPD often feel inadequate, hopeless and unable to cope with everyday life. Other symptoms include:

- Uncontrollable crying
- Persistent sadness
- Loss of appetite
- Insomnia (not due to baby waking up in the night)
- Moodiness
- Anxiety or panic attacks
- Difficulty concentrating
- Lack of interest in the baby
- Fear of harming the baby

If a woman exhibits any of these symptoms for more than two weeks she should seek professional help.

## TREATMENT FOR PERINATAL/POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION:

Talk with your doctor or midwife about your symptoms and concerns. Ask your doctor or midwife for a referral to a therapist or psychiatrist, or check with your insurance company for a list of mental health providers. Treatment options can include:

- Support groups
- Private psychotherapy



- Medication
- Light Therapy

**CONNECTICUT RESOURCES:**

- Connecticut Department of Public Health  
<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Family-Health/Maternal-Depression/Perinatal-Depression>
- Postpartum Support International  
<https://www.postpartum.net>

**For more information visit the following websites:**

- Office on Women’s Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
<https://womenshealth.gov/>
- National Center for Education in Maternal and Child Health at Georgetown University  
<https://ncemch.org/>
- Helpline: <https://www.helpguide.org/>

**TO FIND PROVIDERS IN CONNECTICUT’S COMMUNITY RESOURCES DATABASE:**

Search by service names:

[Mental Health Evaluation](#)

[General Counseling Services](#)

[Psychiatric Disorder Counseling](#)

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*SOURCES: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: Office on Women’s Health, Depression After Delivery*

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