



POSTPARTUM SUPPORT
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Postpartum Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

Approximately 9% of women experience postpartum post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) following childbirth. Most often, this illness is caused by a real or perceived trauma during delivery or postpartum. These traumas could include:

- Prolapsed cord
- Unplanned C-section
- Use of vacuum extractor or forceps to deliver the baby
- Baby going to NICU
- Feelings of powerlessness, poor communication and/or lack of support and reassurance during the delivery
- Women who have experienced a previous trauma, such as rape or sexual abuse, are also at a higher risk for experiencing postpartum PTSD.
- Women who have experienced a severe physical complication or injury related to pregnancy or childbirth, such as severe postpartum hemorrhage, unexpected hysterectomy, severe preeclampsia/eclampsia, perineal trauma (3rd or 4th degree tear), or cardiac disease.

Symptoms

Symptoms of postpartum PTSD might include:

- Intrusive re-experiencing of a past traumatic event (which in this case may have been the childbirth itself)
- Flashbacks or nightmares
- Avoidance of stimuli associated with the event, including thoughts, feelings, people, places and details of the event
- Persistent increased arousal (irritability, difficulty sleeping, hypervigilance, exaggerated startle response)
- Anxiety and panic attacks
- Feeling a sense of unreality and detachment

Postpartum PTSD is temporary and treatable with professional help. If you feel you may be suffering from this illness, know that it is not your fault and you are not to blame. You can use [our resource page](#) to reach out now. We understand what you are going through and will connect you to people who understand and can help.



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