



**TheAcorn
Centre**

Post natal depression



*Charitable Incorporated
Organisation No: 1163154*

It is NOT your fault that you have PND. Support and therapy can help the episode of illness to end as quickly as possible

What is postnatal depression?

Postnatal depression (PND) is a depressive illness that occurs after having a baby. It is common for women following childbirth to experience a period of 'low' mood. This can range in severity from a mild and normal period of mood disturbance ('baby blues'), through to PND and the most severe and rarest problem (postnatal psychosis). This leaflet explains about with PND.

How common is PND?

PND is common. It occurs in 10 to 15 per cent or one in seven to ten mothers.

When does PND occur?

PND usually develops within the first month following childbirth. It may develop out of the 'baby blues'. Episodes of depression may be more common in mothers for many months after having a baby. Where PND stops and ordinary depression begins is unclear.

How is PND treated?

PND is treatable. It is treated in much the same way as ordinary depression.

What to do if you have PND.

- ◆ Don't 'bottle things up'. Talk to somebody about how you feel.
- ◆ Remember that depression is an illness and you are not suffering from it because you are weak or hopeless. It is very common and it will get better.
- ◆ Speak to your health visitor or GP, they can sort out the best way of helping you
- ◆ Do not worry that you will lose your baby. When mothers have PND they often think they are bad mothers and that if they speak to someone, like their GP, they will have their baby taken from them. This will NOT happen. You will get the help you need to manage your PND and for it not to have the same impact on you. This will then help you to deal with the stresses of motherhood.
- ◆ Having a baby is tiring and stressful for any mother. You will not be able to manage all the things you did before the birth. Reduce your commitments and accept help.
- ◆ Take any opportunity you can to get some sleep.
- ◆ Try to keep to your normal diet – you will need all the energy you can get.
- ◆ Involve your partner, having a young baby will be difficult for him too, and he will be concerned for you. Encourage him to talk to your health visitor or GP so they can understand what things are like for you.
- ◆ Try to get some time to yourself and with your partner if you can.
- ◆ Talk to other mums with new babies - they will feel many of the things you do.

What are the symptoms of PND?

- ◆ Feeling 'low', 'miserable' and tearful for no apparent reason. These feelings persist for most of the time, though they may be worse at certain times of day, particularly the morning
- ◆ Irritability is common. This may be with other children, the new baby and particularly with your partner.
- ◆ Sleep disturbance is part of looking after a new baby. However in PND there may be additional problems of finding it hard to go to sleep even though you are tired, or waking early in the morning.
- ◆ Given that looking after a young baby means having less sleep than usual, it is no surprise that mothers often feel they have no energy. This can be even worse in mothers with PND.
- ◆ Appetite is sometimes affected, with mothers not being interested in food. This can be a particular problem since new mothers need all the energy they can get to look after their babies.
- ◆ Anxiety frequently occurs in PND. This may take many forms. It may be feeling tense and 'on edge' all the time. Normal concerns and anxieties that any mother feels for a new baby may become overwhelming. Anxiety frequently occurs in PND. This may take many forms. It may be feeling tense and 'on edge' all the time. Normal concerns and anxieties that any mother feels for a new baby may become overwhelming.
- ◆ In addition mothers may experience 'panic attacks' which are episodes lasting several minutes when they feel as if something catastrophic is about to happen - such as collapsing, having a heart attack or stroke. These are extremely frightening but they get better on their own.
- ◆ Depression is often accompanied by feelings of being 'worthless' and 'hopeless'. These feelings are common in PND. All mothers are faced with new and sometimes difficult problems with a new baby. However, mothers with PND feel all the more 'not able to cope' and unable to see a way through their difficulties.

About the Acorn Centre

The Acorn Centre can give you space where you can think about how you are feeling and a supportive counsellor who can listen to your concerns.

You can feel secure in a confidential environment to talk about your post natal depression, your emotions and what this means to you and your family.

Please note, the information about Post Natal Depression contained in this leaflet is taken from www.NetDoctor.co.uk

Our services include:

- ◆ Pregnancy testing
- ◆ Counselling around the results of tests
- ◆ Infertility counselling
- ◆ Miscarriage counselling
- ◆ Still birth counselling
- ◆ Relationship work for couples affected by either baby loss or infertility
- ◆ Traumatic birth counselling
- ◆ Termination for foetal abnormality
- ◆ Pre and/or post abortion counselling
- ◆ Parenting
- ◆ Family support and counselling following all of the above
- ◆ Access to contraception (where)
- ◆ Sexual Infections (where to access help)
- ◆ Post natal depression counselling
- ◆ Parenting skills (young parents)
- ◆ Counselling services for young people

Fees

While we are no longer able to offer our services free of charge, we still continue to try to make our services accessible to all. For people who are unemployed and wish to access our services, we will discuss and agree an affordable donation in advance. For those who are in paid employment, donations are asked for based on your hourly rate.

The Acorn Centre

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Website: www.acorncentrewarks.org.uk

Opening hours:

Monday 10am - 2pm

Wednesday 10am - 2pm

Friday 10am - 6pm (by appointment only)