

RECOGNIZING POSTPARTUM PSYCHOSIS

COMMON SYMPTOMS

There are many varied symptoms that may occur in postpartum psychosis, and they often change very rapidly. If you have a history of bipolar disorder, depression, or schizoaffective disorder, your symptoms might be similar to those you've experienced in the past. Because up to half of women who experience postpartum psychosis have no prior history of psychiatric illness, these symptoms may also be completely new for you.

Mania

- Feeling elated, over-excited, or "on top of the world"
- Increased energy, activity, or goal-focused behavior
- Racing thoughts, being more talkative, a "busy" brain, increased creativity, or pressured speech
- Not being able to, or not wanting to, sleep
- Feeling restless, agitated, or unable to keep still
- Extreme irritability, impatience, anger or rage
- Feeling easily distractable

Depression

- Feeling low, flat, tearful, emotional, or crying easily
- Anxiety, feeling tense, nervousness
- Feeling withdrawn and not wanting to talk to or be near others
- Tired, heavy, or without energy
- Having a harder time taking care of yourself or your baby

Psychosis

- Feeling confused, very foggy, or like you are losing gaps of time
- Seeing, hearing, or feeling things that aren't there or others can't see/hear
- Very unusual thoughts or beliefs that people around you think are strange and out-of-character
- Feeling suspicious, guarded, paranoid, or afraid of people, events, or environments
- Feeling detached from reality, or like you are in a dream

Providers:

Request a consultation at MGHP3.org/consult-line

Risk factors?

Unfortunately we don't know much about what causes PP. Likely factors include genetics and pregnancy-related hormones, but even those are not fully understood, and there are certainly other causes as well. Some risk factors we do know about include anxiety or depression during pregnancy, history of depression or bipolar disorder (in self or family), immune system or thyroid dysregulation, or sleep disturbances.

**The Postpartum
Psychosis Project**

at Massachusetts General Hospital

Find resources,
research, and more at
MGHP3.org or call
(617)-643-7205

in partnership with Postpartum
Support International

If this is a psychiatric emergency, please call your
doctor or 911 and go to your
nearest emergency room.

