

fact sheet

Self-Care Tips For Expectant & New Parents



FSCOGESCTIP02

Pregnancy and early parenthood can bring joy, love and connection, but they can also be physically and emotionally demanding. You may feel tired, overwhelmed or unlike yourself at times.

Self-care is not about doing more or getting it right. Sometimes the best self-care is about finding ways you can do less. It is about looking after your wellbeing in small, realistic ways so you can get through the hard days and feel more supported. When you make space for your own needs, it can help reduce stress, build resilience and make it easier to cope with the changes and challenges of this time.

There is no one right way to care for yourself during pregnancy or early parenthood, and what feels manageable may change from day to day. The tips below are simple reminders to help you check in with yourself, protect your wellbeing and get support when you need it.

Practical Support

Practical support can make everyday life feel more manageable and give you space to focus on your wellbeing.

- Accept help with everyday tasks like shopping, cooking, washing or cleaning.
- If someone asks how they can help, try to let them know what would make things easier for you.
- Delegate some regular household tasks so that they're off your mental to-do list.
- Remember that practical support can reduce the load when you are feeling tired, isolated or overwhelmed.

Start & Keep Talking

Talking about how you are feeling can help ease the weight of things and open the door to support.

- If you are finding things hard emotionally, reaching out is an important first step towards support.
- Sharing what you are going through can help you feel less alone and more connected.
- In between opportunities for connection with others, it might be helpful to journal or write down your thoughts.

- Talk to someone you trust, like your partner, a friend or family member, about how you are feeling.
- Speak with your regular GP, who can discuss support options specific to your needs
- Speak with a mental health professional

Avoid Comparison

Letting go of comparison can help reduce pressure and make space for what feels right for you and your family.

- Try to remember that you know your baby and your family best.
- Every baby and family is different and has their own ways of doing things, and that difference is wonderful!
- Reflect on where expectations come from, trust your intuition, and let go of the 'shoulds' – only do what feels right for you and your family.
- Be mindful of how social media makes you feel. If needed, limit your time online or unfollow accounts that leave you feeling worse.
- If you're feeling anxious or uncertain about parenting, seek advice from experienced and qualified professionals.

Get Some Fresh Air

Even a small amount of time outside can support your mood and help you feel more grounded.

- Try to spend a little time outside each day if you can.
- A short walk, a few minutes in the sun, or sitting in the backyard or a local park can help you feel more grounded and refreshed.
- Multitask to get maximum benefits – a walk outdoors with a coffee and a friend or family member ticks a number of self-care boxes.

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Be Kind To Yourself

Being kind to yourself can ease self-pressure and help you through the ups and downs of this time.

- Notice the way you speak to yourself and try to be as kind to yourself as you would be to a friend.
- Remind yourself that you are doing the best you can.
- Small acts of kindness towards yourself and others can help you feel more supported and connected. 🌸

Support Services

If things feel hard, please remember you do not have to manage it all on your own. Support is available, and reaching out for help is a sign of strength. There are many services and resources available for expectant and new parents, including:

- Gidget Foundation Australia
- Beyond Blue
- Lifeline
- PANDA (Perinatal Anxiety & Depression Australia)