



Becoming a mum is a major life transition. While it can be joyful and deeply meaningful, it can also feel exhausting, overwhelming and emotionally intense. Many new mums are recovering physically from birth, feeding and settling their baby, coping with broken sleep and hormones, and adjusting to changes in identity, relationships and daily life, often all at once.

It's common to feel emotional, worried, flat, irritable or unsure of how you're coping. The early days can be especially vulnerable. While baby blues can occur soon after birth, ongoing distress may be a sign extra support is needed. Around 1 in 5 mothers experience perinatal anxiety or depression in Australia, so you are not alone and you are not failing. Looking after your wellbeing is an important part of caring for yourself and your baby.

### Tips & Strategies To Support Your Wellbeing

#### Start & Keep Talking

Opening up about how you're feeling can be an important first step, even if it feels difficult. Many new mums feel pressure to keep going or think they should be coping better, but struggling does not mean you're doing anything wrong.

- Talk to your partner, a friend or family member about how you're really feeling and coping
- Speak with your regular GP, midwife, obstetrician, maternal and child health nurse, or other trusted health professional
- Seek support from a perinatal mental health clinician if things are feeling harder to manage

Remember, seeking help is a sign of strength, not failure. There is no shame in reaching out, as early support can make a meaningful difference.

#### Stay Connected

Motherhood can feel isolating, especially when your days revolve around feeds, naps and little sleep. Staying connected with people who feel safe and supportive can help you feel less alone.

- Reach out with a short phone call or text
- Arrange a visit or spend time with a supportive friend or family member
- Join a local Mother's Group or seek support that feels comfortable, either in-person, online or over the phone
- Find small ways to connect with your partner, like chatting at the end of the day or sharing a quiet moment together

### Rest & Practical Support

Rest may feel impossible with a new baby but finding small ways to reduce your load through practical support can help you recover and adjust.

- Rest when you can, even if it's only for short periods
- Focus on the basics, like food, fluids, rest and recovery
- Accept help with meals, cleaning, shopping, errands or baby care
- Ask for specific help, such as someone holding your baby while you rest or shower

### Eat Well & Stay Hydrated

When you are tired, recovering from birth, or focused on caring for your baby, it can be easy to skip meals or forget to drink enough water. Regular meals and hydration can support your energy, concentration and mood. This is especially important if you are breastfeeding.

- Aim for simple, nutritious foods that are easy to prepare
- Keep snacks and water nearby, and sip regularly
- Try not to rely solely on caffeine to get through the day
- Keep meal options easy at home so it's more manageable

### Fresh Air & Gentle Movement

Even a few minutes outside can support your wellbeing. Fresh air, daylight and gentle movement can help you feel more grounded to get through the day.

- Step outside each day if you can
- Sit in the sun or take a short walk with the pram or baby carrier
- Choose gentle movement that feels manageable for your stage of recovery
- Keep it simple and focus on how it helps you feel, rather than doing a lot

### Make Time For Small Moments To Yourself

Self-care doesn't need to involve large amounts of time and energy. Small, achievable moments can still make a big difference.

- Take a few minutes to sit quietly with a cup of tea or step outside for fresh air

# fact sheet

## Looking After Yourself As A New Mum



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- Listen to music or a podcast, one that helps you feel comforted or connected
- Aim for small, simple things that feel realistic in this season of life, such as a 15min home face mask sheet

### Inform Yourself

Pregnancy, birth and early motherhood can bring many unknowns. Learning from trusted sources can help you feel more informed, reassured and prepared for what to expect.

- Use fact sheets, checklists and trusted apps to help you feel more prepared
- Seek reliable information from credible sources
- Use medical appointments to ask questions, build confidence and understand what support is available

### Lower The Pressure On Yourself

Many mums feel pressure to enjoy every moment, get things right or bounce back quickly. Early motherhood involves adjustment and self-compassion can help ease unrealistic expectations.

- Notice when your inner voice becomes critical
- Speak to yourself with the same kindness you would offer a friend
- Focus on what is essential rather than trying to do it all
- Notice small wins, even on hard days
- Remember that being a good mum does not mean being a perfect one (there is no such thing)

### Avoid Comparison

It is easy to compare yourself to other mums, especially online. But every baby, every recovery and every family is different, and comparison can often leave you feeling worse.

- Remind yourself your journey is your own
- Take a break from social media if needed
- Mute accounts or step back from unhelpful spaces or people
- Seek out supportive, realistic communities

### You Know Your Baby Best

Advice from others can be helpful, but it can also be overwhelming when everyone seems to have an opinion. Over time, you will get to know your baby's needs and what works best for your family.

- Take on advice that feels supportive and leave what doesn't work for you
- Notice your baby's cues, patterns, preferences and what helps them settle
- Trust that you are learning and will continue to find your rhythm

### Know When To Reach For Extra Support

Seeking professional support can feel daunting, especially when you're already stretched. If you're feeling persistently low, anxious, numb, panicked, hopeless or unlike yourself, reaching out can help. Getting support early can make recovery easier. Extra support may be needed if these feelings last for two weeks or more, or if things feel like they're getting harder rather than easier.

- Reach out if distress lasts for 2 weeks or longer, or is getting worse
- Seek support sooner if anxiety, low mood or intrusive thoughts are affecting daily life
- Get urgent support straight away if you or your baby are not safe

### Support Services

There are trusted services and resources available to support mums through pregnancy, early parenthood and the challenges that can come during this time, including:

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

Remember, seeking help is a sign of strength, not failure. Early support can make a meaningful difference for you, your partner and your baby, and there are professionals ready to listen and help. 🌸