

Understanding Perinatal and Postpartum Mental Health

Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs)



What Are PMADs?

Bringing a baby into the world is a huge life change — physically, emotionally, and mentally. It's common to feel a rollercoaster of emotions, but when feelings of sadness, worry, or overwhelm stick around and start affecting your daily life, it might be more than the "baby blues."



During Pregnancy

PMADs can begin before birth — during the perinatal period — not just after delivery.



Beyond Baby Blues

Unlike the baby blues (which last ~2 weeks), PMADs persist longer and feel more intense.



Depression & Anxiety

PMADs include depression and anxiety that make it harder to enjoy parenthood and feel like yourself.

Signs & Symptoms

PMADs can look different for everyone. Here are some common signs to watch for:



Emotional Distress

Feeling overwhelmed, hopeless, or persistently sad. Frequent crying or feeling emotionally numb.



Irritability

Anger, irritability, or frustration that feels out of control.



Disconnection

Difficulty bonding with your baby, or feeling disconnected from your partner or loved ones.



Sleep Trouble

Trouble sleeping even when your baby is asleep. Racing thoughts or constant worry.



Daily Tasks

Difficulty managing day-to-day tasks or feeling unable to keep up with responsibilities.



Scary, unwanted thoughts about harm coming to you or your baby can occur. These thoughts do *not* mean you will act on them, but they can be distressing. Please reach out for support.

Ways to Feel Better

PMADs are common and affect about **1 in 7 new parents**. The good news? Support and treatment can make a big difference.



Therapy

CBT and other evidence-based approaches help shift negative thought patterns and improve coping skills.



Social Support

Talking with trusted friends, family, or a support group can remind you that you're not alone.



Lifestyle Changes

Prioritizing sleep, nourishing foods, gentle movement, and setting boundaries can support emotional well-being.



Medication

For some, medication can be a helpful tool in healing. A healthcare provider can guide you to the right option.

You Deserve to Feel Like Yourself Again

You don't have to navigate this alone. At Ollie, we care about *you* as a person, not *just* as a caregiver. If you're struggling, reach out to us or seek support from people you trust.

Reach Out to Ollie

We are here to support you through every step of your journey.

Talk to Someone You Trust

A friend, family member, or healthcare provider can help you take the first step.

Remember: You Are Not Alone

PMADs are common, treatable, and nothing to be ashamed of. Help is available.

References

- References: American Psychological Association (APA), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Zero to Three, HealthySteps.