

Maternal Emotional Wellness: Self-assessment and referral guide

Life with a new baby can be very demanding and unpredictable. This can make it difficult for you to take care of your needs and emotional wellness. The information below can help you determine your level of emotional wellness and symptoms of concern, and to know Intermountain Healthcare’s recommended actions. See [page 2](#) for information about community resources that are available to help you.

Low-risk symptoms	Recommended action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Some sadness or low mood <input type="checkbox"/> Some worry or feelings of anxiety <input type="checkbox"/> Periodic crying or fluctuating mood <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling bad about not enjoying your baby <input type="checkbox"/> More sleep struggles than expected <input type="checkbox"/> Some disinterest in social activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give yourself permission to talk about your feelings. • Don’t be afraid to ask for or accept help. • Get 4 to 6 hours of uninterrupted sleep 3 nights a week when possible. It’s okay to have a family member give the first feeding of the night. • Eat nutritious foods every 3 to 4 hours and stay hydrated. Avoid caffeine and sweets when possible. • Continue taking a prenatal vitamin for its emotional and physical benefits. • Begin mild to moderate exercise as your doctor permits. • Find ways to laugh and spend time with other adults.
Moderate-risk symptoms	Recommended action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive or uncontrollable crying <input type="checkbox"/> Significant anxiety or panic attacks (symptoms may include rapid breathing and excessive sweating) <input type="checkbox"/> Intense irritability and anger <input type="checkbox"/> Intense feelings of shame or inadequacy <input type="checkbox"/> Significant change in appetite or weight <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty concentrating or making decisions <input type="checkbox"/> Ignoring, or providing excessive care for your baby <input type="checkbox"/> Less interest in favorite activities <input type="checkbox"/> Concerns expressed by people close to you <input type="checkbox"/> Moderate disturbances to appetite or sleep 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contact your obstetric (OB) provider and schedule an appointment as soon as possible. • Seek psychiatric care as directed by your OB provider. • Find a qualified provider or therapist by calling United Way’s Help Me Grow at 801-691-5322 or contact your insurance provider for help accessing mental health services. • Seek in-person or online support groups through social media. • Educate yourself about postpartum mental health; postpartum.net is a great resource. • Prioritize your needs in the home.
High-risk symptoms	Recommended action
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Strange beliefs or visual disturbances <input type="checkbox"/> Thoughts to harm yourself or your baby <input type="checkbox"/> Taking actions to harm yourself or your baby <input type="checkbox"/> Obsessive, intrusive thoughts about your baby <input type="checkbox"/> Significant harmful reactions to medication <input type="checkbox"/> Confusion <input type="checkbox"/> Neglect or abandonment of your baby 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with your OB provider immediately. • Go to an emergency room right away if you fear for your own or your baby’s safety. • Remember you are not alone and help is available. Speak openly and honestly about your symptoms. • Tell loved ones you are experiencing a serious emotional struggle.

Where can I get help?

Get help from any of these community resources:

- **Intermountain Connect Care Behavioral Health.** Call toll free: **833-442-2670**
- **Postpartum Support International - Utah Chapter.** The Utah Maternal Health Collaborative offers free phone and email support provided by mothers who have experienced emotional health complications as well as helpful local resources and referrals. Call the crisis line at 801-587-3000 or visit psiutah.org.
- **Postpartum Support International.** This agency provides education and resources to mothers with any of the symptoms listed on [page 1](#). Call 800-944-4773 or visit postpartum.net.
- **United Way, Help Me Grow.** Call 801-691-5322 and volunteers will link you to community mental health services.
- **National Suicide Prevention Hotline.** Call 800-273-TALK (8255).
- **National Peer Mom Volunteers.** Call 800-PPD-MOMS (773-6667).

Questions for my doctor

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