

If you or someone you know needs help, contact:

National Maternal Mental Health Hotline (English/Spanish):

Call/Text: 1-833-943-5746

National Suicide Prevention Hotline

988 or 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

Crisis Text Line

Text Home to 741741

DC Access Helpline

202-561-7000 or
1-888-793-4357

DC Community Response Team

202-673-6495

Arlington County Crisis Hotline

703-228-5160

Fairfax County Crisis Hotline

703-573-5679

**Montgomery County
Mobile Crisis Team**

240-777-4000

PG County Community Crisis Hotline

301-864-7130 or MD 211

To learn more about PMADs:

Postpartum Support International

Call 1-800-944-4773

Text 503-894-9453

<https://www.postpartum.net>

*The term 'non-birthing people' is used throughout this handout to include the broader population of caregivers who are biologically unable to carry a child gestationally but may not identify as a man or a father. It can also include caregivers, such as adoptive parents, grandparents, or extended family members who primarily care for a child. The information shared in this handout is supported by studies that examine mental health among cisgender men (men whose gender identity corresponds with their birth sex) during the postpartum period. Due to the lack of research examining the broader population, this handout does not include statistics about caregivers who do not identify as men, such as gender non-conforming or trans-identifying people. This handout will maintain the integrity of the original statistics by using the term for the population referenced in those studies. We do not intend to exclude those who do not identify with those terms.

Scarff, J. R. (2019). Postpartum Depression in Men. *Innovations in clinical neuroscience*, 16(5-6), 11-14.

Kim, P., & Swain, J. E. (2007). Sad dads: paternal postpartum depression. *Psychiatry*, 4(2), 35-47. (Scarff J. R., 2019).

This program is funded by the A. James & Alice B. Clark Foundation as part of the Clark Parent & Child Network.



Universal Screening for Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders

Information for Dads and Non-Birthing Caregivers



Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs)

Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADs) are a group of mental health conditions.

Symptoms can be experienced during and after pregnancy. PMAD conditions include depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

We screen all caregivers of infants ages 0-6 months for symptoms of PMADs in the Emergency Department (ED) and Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU).

PMADs can affect all caregivers. This information focuses on how this disorder affects Dads and non-birthing caregivers.* A non-birthing caregiver's mood can affect how they treat their child and family. About 10% of all Dads experience symptoms of depression or anxiety after the baby is born, also known as the postpartum period. We also know that if the birthing parent is depressed, Dad also has an increased risk of depression.

PMADs in Dads and non-birthing caregivers can look different than they do in Moms and birthing people. Non-birthing caregivers may say that they feel fine when they do not. They may say "I'm tired" when they feel like yelling. Non-birthing caregivers may become upset about things they would not have become upset about before the birth. Undetected and untreated depression or anxiety in a caregiver can negatively affect how a child behaves, grows, and learns.

Why We Screen for PMADs:

PMADs are extremely common.

Having a new baby brings both joy and stress to nearly every family. We screen for PMADs early in a baby's life to identify challenges that your family may be experiencing. Too many families suffer in silence; they may not know what is wrong or know how or where to get help—or they may be unable to speak up.

At Children's National Hospital, we:

- Screen caregivers of babies in our NICU for PMADs every 2 to 4 weeks during the baby's inpatient stay
- Screen caregivers of babies, 0 to 6 months old, who come to the Emergency Department for care
- Commit to helping families by identifying PMADs and connecting families to resources for healing

Symptoms of PMADs in Dads and Non-Birthing Caregivers Include:

- Feeling exhausted, irritable, nervous, or restless
- Being unable to plan or decide
- Feeling jealous of how much time their partner is spending with the baby
- Not feeling interested in their relationship with Mom/partner or the baby
- Worrying about the baby's health
- Having disturbing thoughts of accidentally harming the baby

