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Taking care of your mental health

When pregnancy is not going as planned

A simple guide

This resource is available
in multiple languages.
Ask your midwife for
more information.



Surrey and Sussex

Taking care of your mental health when your pregnancy is not going as planned



Sometimes pregnancy can be hard.
Or it does not go to plan.



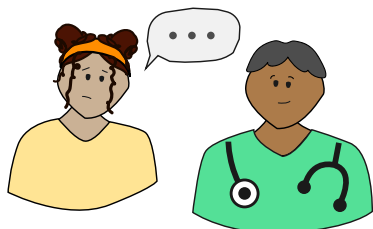
You may have very bad sickness.
You may get unexpected test results.



These can affect your mental health.
You are not alone. This guide is here
to help you.

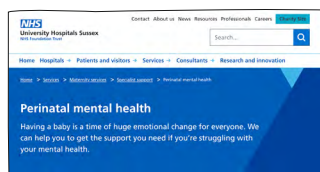
Taking care of your mental health when your pregnancy is not going as planned

Who can help

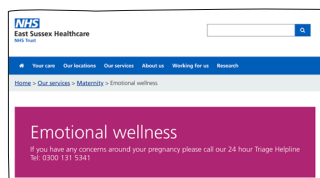


You can talk to your midwife or GP.

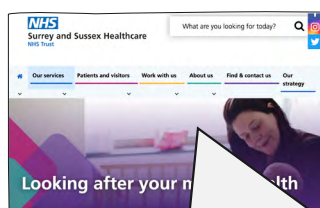
They will explain the services that can help and whether there is a waiting list for them. You may be referred to your hospital's specialist mental health midwife.



Click on the links below to find out more about support in your area.



West Sussex and Brighton & Hove: uhsussex.nhs.uk/services/maternity/specialist-support/mental-health



East Sussex: esht.nhs.uk/service/maternity/emotional-wellness

Surrey: surreyandsussex.nhs.uk/our-services/womens-services/maternity-services/your-mental-wellbeing-during-and-after-pregnancy

Taking care of your mental health when your pregnancy is not going as planned

Who can help



Click on the links below for more information on health visitors in your area:

Brighton and West Sussex:

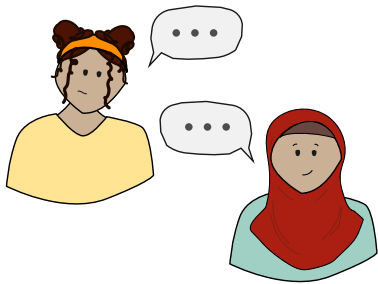
healthforunder5s.co.uk/sussex/services/specialist-support/specialist-health-visitors-perinatal-and-infant-mental-health-pnmh

East Sussex: familyhubs.eastsussex.gov.uk/families/mental-wellbeing



Taking care of your mental health when your pregnancy is not going as planned

Who can help



NHS talking therapies can help with your mental health. They involve talking to a counsellor or therapist about how you are feeling.

You can access support using the links below.

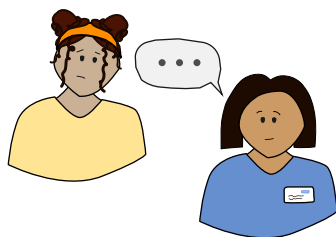
Brighton: brightonandhove wellbeing.org/talking-therapies

East Sussex: healthinmind.org.uk

West Sussex: westsussex talkingtherapies.nhs.uk

Surrey: mindmattersnhs.co.uk

Your GP can also refer you.



Your doctor or midwife may refer you to the Specialist Perinatal Mental Health Service for further support.

Taking care of your mental health when your pregnancy is not going as planned

Who can help



If you need help right now you can:

- Call 111 and choose the mental health option.
- Call the Samaritans on 116 123.

In Sussex you can also:

Text the word SUSSEX to 85258.

In Surrey you can also:

Call 0800 915 4644.

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Your health: Severe sickness



Pregnancy sickness can be very hard to cope with.

The most extreme type of sickness is hyperemesis gravidarum (HG). HG affects around 3 in 100 pregnancies.



Severe sickness can have a huge impact on your mental health.

Women with HG are more likely to have depression and to consider ending their pregnancy.



It can help to talk to someone about what you are going through.

Pregnancy Sickness Support has a free helpline. Call 0800 055 4361 for help.

Taking care of your mental health when your pregnancy is not going as planned

Your health: Severe sickness



People with severe sickness sometimes think about harming themselves.

For most people these thoughts do not last. If you find yourself making plans to harm yourself you should get help straight away.



Mind has information on how to cope with suicidal thoughts. Click on the link below for more information.

mind.org.uk/information-support/suicidal-thoughts-and-suicide-prevention/understanding-your-experiences



If you need to speak to someone right now you can call the Samaritans on 116 123.

You can also call 111 and select the mental health option.

Taking care of your mental health when your pregnancy is not going as planned

Your health: Pelvic girdle pain



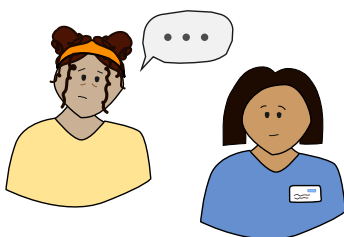
Around 1 in 5 pregnant women have pelvic girdle pain (PGP).

Symptoms include pain in the lower body. This can include severe pain in the lower back, bottom and groin. It can also spread to your thighs.



PGP can make it harder or impossible to do everyday things.

This can make you feel frustrated, guilty and upset.

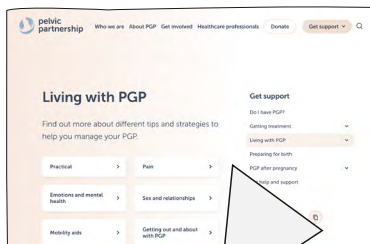


Being in pain every day can also make you feel tired or depressed.

If PGP is affecting your mental health, talk to your midwife.

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Your health: Pelvic girdle pain



The Pelvic Partnership offers tips to help you manage your mental health while living with PGP.

Click on the link below for more information.

pelvicpartnership.org.uk/get-support/living-with-pgp

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Your health: Other complications

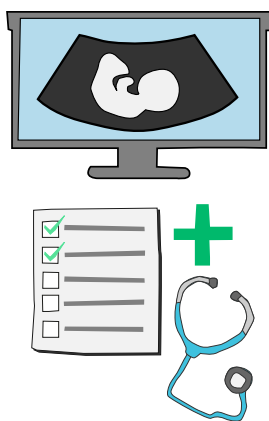


Tommy's has a list of common pregnancy complications.

Click on the link below to get information and support.

tommys.org/pregnancy-information/complications

Unexpected test results



During your pregnancy you will have scans and tests.

These are to check your baby is growing as expected.

Some tests also check for diseases and health conditions.

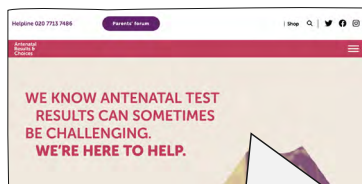
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Unexpected test results



It can be a shock to find out your baby is unwell or at risk of a serious health condition.

You should be given information about your choices.



Antenatal Results and Choices (ARC) offers support after scan and test results.

Call 0207 713 7486 to access their helpline.

Click on the link below for more information.

arc-uk.org

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Dealing with baby loss



Very sadly, some babies die during pregnancy, birth, or shortly afterwards.

Every loss is different. There is no right or wrong way to feel about it.

You do not have to go through this alone.



You may have had to end your pregnancy for medical reasons. This is called termination for medical reasons or TFMR.

Your feelings are no less real or painful than any other type of baby loss.

Taking care of your mental health when your pregnancy is not going as planned

Dealing with baby loss



You may find it helpful to talk to other people who have had a similar experience.

Antenatal Results & Choices (ARC) has a password-protected forum for families affected by TFMR.

Click on the link below to register.

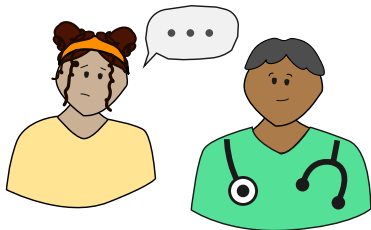
arc-uk.org/for-parents/arc-forum



Our “Taking care of your mental health after pregnancy or baby loss” guide has more information on coping with all types of baby loss.

Taking care of your mental health when your pregnancy is not going as planned

Your history



You should tell your doctor or midwife about your mental health history.

This is important even if you have been feeling well for a long time before you became pregnant.

This will help make sure a plan is in place to support you.



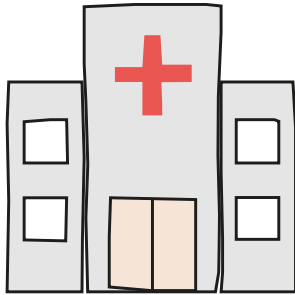
If you have experience of care, pregnancy can bring up some hard emotions.

You might feel overwhelmed. You might have mixed feelings about becoming a parent.

Talk to your midwife about how you are feeling.

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Further help



Your care team is here to support your mental health when your pregnancy is not going as planned.

Your hospital's specialist mental health midwife may be able to support you.

You can also speak to your GP or health visitor about how you are feeling.

For further information on pregnancy complications see:

HER Foundation: Support with severe pregnancy sickness
hyperemesis.org

TFMR Mamas: Support for people affected by TFMR
tfmrmmas.com

Diabetes UK: Information on gestational diabetes
diabetes.org.uk/about-diabetes/gestational-diabetes

Taking care of your mental health when your pregnancy is not going as planned

For further support with unexpected test results see:

Down Syndrome UK: Positive About Down Syndrome Community
positiveaboutdownsyndrome.co.uk

SOFT UK: Information on Trisomy
soft.org.uk

If you do not have internet, you can ask your midwife or GP to print you a copy of any resources in this guide.

This guide has been reviewed by service users and support staff as well as lived experience champions and staff of the Maternal Mental Health Alliance.