



Help and emotional support for parents during pregnancy and the first year after having a baby

Having a baby can be joyful, exciting and rewarding. However, it is also common for pregnant women and new parents to experience anxiety, depression or emotional distress.

As many as one in five women and up to one in 10 partners experience emotional difficulties during pregnancy and in the first year after their baby's birth. **This can happen to anyone.**

Your local NHS IAPT service offers free, confidential talking therapy for people who have symptoms of anxiety or depression. IAPT stands for 'Improving Access to Psychological Therapy'. They give priority to pregnant women and new parents. This leaflet explains more about the service and the help we can offer you if you need it.

It is common for pregnant women and new parents to experience:

- Low mood, sadness and tearfulness
- Anxiety, worry and tension
- Irritability and anger
- Difficult or unexpected feelings towards your pregnancy or baby
- Poor sleep even when your baby sleeps well
- Feeling unable to cope or enjoy anything
- Thoughts that you are not a good enough parent
- Worrying thoughts about your baby
- Anxiety about labour or struggling to come to terms with a difficult labour.

Asking for help

It can be difficult to talk about how you are feeling and ask for help. Common reasons for this are:

- You may not know what is wrong
- You may feel ashamed that you are not enjoying your baby or coping as you believe you should
- You may worry that your baby will be taken away.

Struggling emotionally at this time can happen to anyone. It is not your fault.

Asking for help doesn't mean you can't cope or are not able to care for your child. It's the start of getting the right help and support to ensure you can be the parent you want to be. We know that lots of parents don't feel able to talk about how they are honestly feeling because they feel guilty or are worried that others will think they are a 'bad' parent. What really matters is that you get the help that you need.

How an IAPT service can help you

IAPT offers short-term talking therapy to give you space to talk. The types of therapy offered will vary depending on your local IAPT service. These may include guided self-help sessions with a therapist, cognitive behaviour therapy and counselling.

How to contact IAPT

You can refer yourself to IAPT by phoning your local service directly. Contact details for services in Lancashire and South Cumbria can be found at the end of this leaflet. You may find it hard to make that first contact yourself. In this case, ask your midwife, health visitor, friends or a family member to help you make that first call. Your GP can also make the referral. We know that pregnancy and the first year of your baby's birth is a very important time. Your local IAPT service will offer you an assessment and treatment as soon as possible.

What to expect when you contact IAPT

When you first telephone you will be asked for some brief details. A time will be arranged for you to speak to one of the therapists. This appointment will be booked as soon as possible, usually within a few days. The first appointment is to find out about your current difficulties. This helps us decide how we can best help you. At the end of the appointment, we will discuss the support options available and work with you to agree a plan.

All IAPT services aim to be flexible. We want to make it as easy as possible for you to get the help you need. Services can be offered over the phone or video call and you can often bring your baby to face to face sessions if you want to.

Find your local IAPT service

Area	Telephone	Website
Blackburn and Darwen	01254 226037	https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/mindsmatter2-self-referral
Blackpool	01253 955 700	https://www.bfwh.nhs.uk/our-services/supporting-minds/
Burnley	01282 657268	https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/mindsmatter2-self-referral
Chorley and South Ribble	01772 643168	https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/mindsmatter2-self-referral
Fylde and Wyre	01253 955943	https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/mindsmatter2-self-referral
Hyndburn	01254 226007	https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/mindsmatter2-self-referral
Lancaster and Morecambe	01524 550552	https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/mindsmatter2-self-referral
Pendle	01282 657927	https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/mindsmatter2-self-referral
Preston	01772 773437	https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/mindsmatter2-self-referral
Ribble Valley	01200 420499	https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/mindsmatter2-self-referral
Rossendale	01282 657792	https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/mindsmatter2-self-referral
South Cumbria	0300 5550345	https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/first-step
West Lancashire	01695 684177	https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/mindsmatter2-self-referral
Lancashire Women – Burnley Hyndburn, Pendle, Rossendale	0300 3301354	https://lancashirewomen.org/get-support

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