



(402) 489-3834



Postpartum Psychosis

Intensive perinatal mental health programs in the USA:

<https://www.postpartum.net/get-help/intensive-perinatal-psych-treatment-in-the-us/>



Postpartum Support International 24 hour Helpline: call or text 1-800-944-4773

Postpartum psychosis is very rare, affecting only 1-2 per 1000 postpartum moms.

If you previously had postpartum psychosis, there's a 50% chance you'll get it again.

There's a 75% likelihood of developing postpartum psychosis if a 1st degree relative suffered with it.

Bipolar disorder: Women with bipolar disorder are at increased risk for psychosis. However, half of moms with postpartum psychosis have no history of diagnosed or significant psychiatric illness, because bipolar disorder is often difficult to diagnose. Bipolar disorder involves episodes of depression that alternate with mania, and it's sometimes hard to tell the difference between bipolar disorder and "unipolar" depression. If a woman is not properly diagnosed with bipolar disorder, she will not be prescribed the mood stabilizer medications she needs – and she's thus at increased risk for psychosis.

Mental health medications are almost always safe to take while pregnant and breastfeeding. DON'T stop taking them, as the risk to you and your baby is likely greater without the meds. A mental health professional can help you manage your mental health and medications, while considering what's best for you and your baby.

Symptoms of postpartum psychosis: Symptoms typically start within 2 weeks after delivery. Moms with psychosis typically act "oddly," agitated, aloof, emotionally labile, have rambling speech, are paranoid, or experience delusions or hallucinations.

Moms with postpartum mood & anxiety disorders WITHOUT psychosis may have concerning thoughts, but they are able to think rationally. Intrusive thoughts of harm coming to you or your baby should scare you. If such thoughts DO concern you, you're thinking clearly and rationally. This is not psychosis. And, thoughts are not actions. If you're aware that your "intrusive" thoughts are not normal, it's very unlikely you would ever act on them. But, get help to make them stop, because it's miserable to feel this way.

On the other hand, if intrusive thoughts of harm seem normal and logical to you, this is likely psychosis. Since you may not realize your thoughts are irrational, hopefully others around you will take notice. Ideally, they will intervene by asking if you have plans to act on your thoughts, and then assist you in getting the help you need. This is a medical emergency.

Of the mothers with psychosis, 5% die by suicide, and 4.5% commit infanticide.

You're not alone. You're not to blame. There's help available. You'll get better.