Bradford District Care
NHS Foundation Trust

# New baby new feelings

Pregnancy can be a time of excitement and happiness. It can also be tiring, stressful and uncertain. It's normal to have mixed feelings about being pregnant and what the future may hold.

Whether it's your first child or not, your life will change and you'll have more responsibilities. It's important to have realistic expectations of yourself and motherhood. Taking good care of yourself now will put you in a better place to cope and enjoy your pregnancy and your new baby.

## Worries you may have

During pregnancy you may feel low or anxious. Common concerns may include:

- Will I be a good mother?
- Will my baby be healthy?
- Will I bond with my baby?
- How will I cope with a baby?
- What effect this will have on my family?
- Will I be able to meet the needs of my other children when caring for a young baby?
- My work.
- Getting time for myself.
- My relationship with my partner.
- Giving birth.
- Previous pregnancies.
- Recent bereavements.
- My childhood experiences.
- Previous experiences of depression.
- Money worries.

Inside this leaflet are some ideas to help you deal with these worries.

If you're experiencing a mental health crisis seek urgent help by ringing the First Response Service - **0800 952 1181.**

## Get support

It's normal to feel anxious and low at times and it's important to seek help and support so that you can feel better. If you're concerned about how you feel you should speak to your GP, midwife or health visitor. Getting help or support now will put you in a better position to cope when you have had your baby and may prevent difficulties such as post-natal depression from developing.

If you have a history of or current severe mental health issues talk to your health professional about referral to the Specialist Mother and Baby Mental Health team for advice and support.

## Symptoms of stress

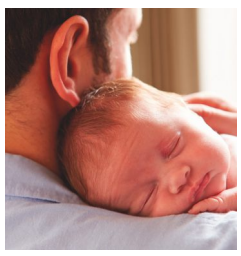
Dizziness, racing heart, sweatiness, shortness of breath and shakiness are common symptoms of stress. They're also useful indicators that it would be good for you to try to resolve the issues which are worrying you. If you're concerned about your physical health, talk to your midwife or health visitor or GP.

## Domestic violence

If you're in a relationship which makes you feel controlled or threatened, you may be at risk of violence or abuse from your partner when you're pregnant. Many cases of domestic violence begin during pregnancy. Domestic violence is dangerous for you, your baby and your children. If you're experiencing physical or mental abuse talk to you midwife or contact Women's Aid: **(0808 2000 247)** or on helpline@womensaid.org.uk

Domestic abuse services:
Staying Put – **0808 2800999**
Keighley Domestic Violence Services – **01535 210999**

## Tips for dad, partners, family and friends



**Accept** that the mother may be experiencing difficulties and resist the urge to pressure her to feel happier than she really does.

**Listen** to her worries.

**Encourage** her to talk to her midwife, health visitor or GP if she is finding things difficult.

**Share** the running of the house and the chores.

**Give her time** to rest.

**Understand** that her feeling low and anxious is temporary and she needs your support.

**Remind** her that she will feel better.

R2R

**Ready to Relate** – Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust provides information to help you understand your baby and develop your bond with them.
https://readytorelate.bdct.nhs.uk/ - or use this QR code

If you are worried that the mother is experiencing a mental health crisis, contact First Response 0800 952 1181.

Produced by Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust.

PIN: 00572v1 | Published: August 2024 | Review date: August 2027

W: www.bdct.nhs.uk @BDCFT

## Some relaxing things to do…

Focus on things that give you a sense of connection, pleasure and accomplishment. Simple things are worthwhile prioritising and can help your well-being.

- Go for a walk
- Read a magazine
- Have a long bath
- Stretch your body
- Do some exercise that you enjoy
- Watch a good film
- Spend time with a friend
- Do a relaxation exercise
- Watch a video that makes you laugh
- Take your children somewhere you all enjoy
- Have a trip outside
- Have a massage
- Listen to music
- Give someone you care about a hug

# Look after yourself

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### Talk
Notice the emotions you're having and talk about them. Sharing your worries and difficulties can relieve the pressure they put on you. Talk to people you feel are supportive and who listen to you. Sometimes family and friends can provide this, sometimes you need help from others. Talk with your GP, midwife or health visitor, they may be able to help or refer you on to a service which can.

### Rest
When you're tired everything is more difficult to cope with. Rest is vital for keeping you healthy. Have naps or go to bed early so that you have enough sleep.

### Meet others
Meet others who are pregnant or have a baby. Antenatal groups or classes will help you find out about birth and what it's like to have a baby or more than one child. You can also get tips from other people in a similar situation to you.

### Exercise
Gentle exercise can help you feel less slowed down and improve your sleep and research shows it can improve our mood.

### Relaxation
Try to ensure that you do activities which are relaxing and enjoyable: read a magazine, go for a walk, have a long bath. If you feel yourself getting stressed, you may find this breathing method helps as it calms the brain:

This calming breathing technique for stress, anxiety and panic takes just a few minutes and can be done anywhere.

You will get the most benefit if you do it regularly, as part of your daily routine.

You can do it standing up, sitting in a chair that supports your back, or lying on a bed or yoga mat on the floor.

Make yourself as comfortable as you can. If you can, loosen any clothes that restrict your breathing.

If you're lying down, place your arms a little bit away from your sides, with the palms up. Let your legs be straight, or bend your knees so your feet are flat on the floor.

If you're sitting, place your arms on the chair arms.

If you're sitting or standing, place both feet flat on the ground. Whatever position you're in, place your feet roughly hip-width apart.

Let your breath flow as deep down into your belly as is comfortable, without forcing it.

Try breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth.

Breathe in gently and regularly. Some people find it helpful to count steadily from 1 to 5. You may not be able to reach 5 at first. Hold it for a moment.

Then let it flow out gently, counting from 1 to 5 again if you find this helpful.

Keep doing this for a few minutes, aim for 5 minutes.

### Deal with your money worries
Find out about benefits you may be entitled to, get advice and support, for example, from The Citizens' Advice Bureau (03442 451 282) or the health plus advisor at your local health centre.

**You & Your Care**

**Citizen's advice bureau 03442 451 282** - offering free advice so you can move forward.

### Get support for issues from your past
At times of change and stress, issues from your past can cause distress. Getting support and giving yourself time to explore these issues can enable you to cope better and feel more positive about your future. Ask your GP, Midwife or health visitor if you'd like to be referred for free NHS counselling.

### If you've a partner... Communicate
Talk about how you're feeling, discuss how you'll bring up your child, talk about the effect it will have on your relationship. If you've problems in your relationship try to resolve them - get help if necessary.

### Start afresh
Treat each day as a new day...Look at a new day as an opportunity to start afresh, especially if things have been difficult or overwhelming the day before.

Your midwife, health visitor or GP can give you information on a free counselling or art therapy service in your local area. Your Doctor can also give you advice on antidepressants.

### Information, advice and support families

- Activities
- Children centres
- Childcare
- Parenting
- Disabilities
- Housing
- Alcohol and drug misuse
- Polish/Slovak/Czech helpline

NHS
**Bradford District and Craven Talking Therepies**

If you're feeling low, you've come to the right place for help.
Tel: 01274 221234
**www.bdctalkingtherapies.nhs.uk**
**Write to us at:** Bradford District and Craven Talking Therapies, Bradford District Care NHS Foundation Trust, Level 5, New Mill, Victoria Road, Saltaire, BD18 3LD

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**Specialist mother and baby mental health team**
Service to support women during pregnancy and up to one year after the birth of their child if they have a history of or current severe mental health issue. Discuss a referral with your health professional.

City of BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Bradford Council Information about Children, Young People and Families

**https://www.bradford.gov.uk/site-navigation?l1=1177**

FIRST RESPONSE **Call:** 0800 952 1181

**Urgent help by ringing the First Response Service**

For support if you're experiencing a mental health crisis

**www.bdct.nhs.uk/services/first-response/**

GOV.UK

Check benefits and financial support you can get
**www.gov.uk/check-benefits-financial-support**

Advice about benefits and financial support available.

The Association for Post Natal Illness Support and information for mothers suffering with post natal depression.

Tel: 020 7386 0868
**www.apni.org**

relate
the relationship people

Relationship advice and counselling, family counselling, sex therapy and youth counselling (10-18yrs). Ask your GP to refer you.

Tel: 01274 726096
**www.relate.org.uk**
Email: **bradrelate@tiscali.co.uk**

women's aid
until women & children are safe

Advocacy, refuge and support for women and children affected by domestic abuse.

Helpline: 0808 2000 247
**www.womensaid.org.uk**

mind

Information on symptoms and treatment of depression.

Tel: 0300 123 3393
**www.mind.org.uk**

nct

The National Childbirth Trust Charity providing information and helplines, local branches offering support groups.
**www.nct.org.uk/branches/bradford-airedale**
Helpline (0300 330 0700)

citizens advice

Citizen Advice
**www.citizensadvice.org.uk**
03442 451282

netmums

Website providing access to a network of mums in your local area. Information on groups, activities and many other issues related to parenting.
**www.netmums.com**

PANDAS

**www.pandasfoundation.org.uk/how-we-can-help/**
0843 28 98 401
**www.act.org.uk**
Bradford and Airedale branch: 0870 421 4580
Enquiry line: 0870 444 8707
Breastfeeding line: 0870 444 8708