

---

# STRATEGIES for MINDFUL LIVING

---

Courtesy of UAB Employee Assistance & Counseling Center

## Maternal Mental Health Month puts spotlight on silent health crisis

Did you know that one in seven women suffer from postpartum depression? Did you know that one in 10 dads also suffer?\*

Clinicians and survivors use Maternal Mental Health Month in May to bring light to the silent health crisis that is untreated and unaddressed Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMADS). PMADS include Depression, Anxiety, PTSD, OCD, Bipolar Disorder, and Psychosis.



### ■ RISK FACTORS

Most new moms are at least familiar with the “baby blues.” Experts estimate that as many as 80 percent of new moms experience feelings of sadness and/or anxiety for two to three weeks after giving birth, which can include feelings of weepiness and mood swings. While for most moms, these feelings pass and life moves forward, for some it is an entirely different story. Many factors can contribute to PMADS including a history of anxiety and depression prior to pregnancy, socioeconomic issues, lack of social support, and hormonal fluctuations.

Difficulty trying to conceive, miscarriage, fetal loss, a traumatic birth, and the delivery of a premature infant can also contribute.

### ■ HELP IS AVAILABLE

If you feel anxiety, depression, or other uncomfortable feelings in the weeks and months before and after delivery, please know that there is help. Postpartum.net is an excellent resource for moms and dads to use to locate support groups and trained providers. Reaching out to a primary care provider, an OBGYN, or even the new child’s pediatrician is a great first step. For UAB employees and

members of their immediate households, the Employee Assistance & Counseling Center is also here to help. Telehealth appointments are available and often much easier for new parents to attend. If you or a loved one is experiencing thoughts of self-harm, thoughts of hurting the baby, or other extreme behaviors, please call 911 or go to your nearest emergency department.

It is time that Maternal Mental Health is no longer brushed aside and thought to be just part of being a new mom. New parents deserve support, care and understanding.

\*Data from [postpartum.net](http://postpartum.net)