



PERINATAL SUPPORT
WASHINGTON

Planning for Another Baby After Postpartum Depression or Anxiety

Planning for another baby after experiencing a perinatal mood or anxiety disorder can be intimidating. It may help to review your experience and make plans for care and support this time.

Reflect on Last Time: *You know yourself best. What was it like last time? What did you learn? About yourself? About your partner? What do you want for this pregnancy/birth/postpartum?*

- Describe the important parts of your experience last time.
- Are there parts of your experience that you worry will happen again?
- What would you do differently?
- Can you identify experiences that made you especially fearful, angry, sad, overwhelmed, or agitated?
- What helped you last time?

Need help finding therapists or medication managers who are experienced with perinatal mood or anxiety disorders?
Visit <http://perinatalsupport.org/for-parents/>
or call our warmline at 1-888-404-7763.

Establish and Visit Your Professional Care Team Now: *This is a great time to research and connect with providers who can help.*

- Identify and consult with a therapist and a medication manager (a psychiatrist or a psychiatric nurse practitioner) who is experienced in the mental health concerns of new parents.
- Be honest and specific about your experience last time.
- Consider inviting your partner to come with you.

Asking for and accepting help can be hard! Ask yourself if you can ask for and receive help. If either of these is difficult for you, discuss this with your providers and loved ones to figure out workarounds.

Line Up a Team to Support You at Home: *Identify your support team members.*

- List family and friends with contacts below who you can call on to help with basic needs and/or for emotional support. Don't forget in-laws, parents, siblings, religious community, babysitters, etc.
- Locate your nearest new parent support group (visit <http://perinatalupport.org/for-parents/supportgroups/>).
- Consider a postpartum doula. Visit NAPS doulas at <https://napsdoulas.com/>
- Keep Perinatal Support Washington's warmline number handy: 1-888-404-7763.

Line Up a Team to Support You at Home: *Delegate needs that can be met by others:*

- Consider who in your support team could care for your older child(ren) and give them extra attention.
- Consider who in your support team could prepare or bring meals. (In addition to dinners, consider asking people for sandwich fixings, fresh fruit and vegetables, high-protein snacks like string cheese, and favorite foods of your younger child(ren).)
- Consider who in your support team could do household chores. (Laundry, dishes, and general pickup are big ones.)

Touch Base with Your Partner

- Talk about your sleep plan with your partner. Remember that it's critical to get chunks of 4-5 hours of uninterrupted sleep. Brainstorm ways to get that in (perhaps split-shifting with a pumped bottle of milk, if you're breastfeeding; perhaps an overnight postpartum doula or your mom or sister overnight if things feel overwhelming).
- Write down ideas for me-time and couple time that are easy and will help you feel like yourselves.
- Talk about where your partner will get support and downtime, too.
- Go over this plan with your partner to see if any other ideas come up.