

## Transcript of Video: Mental Health and Pregnancy - Mental Health for New Parents

Michelle Gebhardt, MD:

Depression and anxiety are so common during pregnancy and after giving birth. About one in five people have depression and anxiety during this time.

Sometimes people talk about the emotional ups and downs right after delivery and refer to it as the baby blues. People might start crying for no reason. They may feel feelings of sadness, of being overwhelmed. This is really, really common.

And this is usually due to the physical changes and fatigue that are happening after childbirth.

The baby blues often start 2 to 3 days after delivery and then they can last about 1 to 2 weeks.

The difference with postpartum depression is that the symptoms are more intense, longer lasting, and they can affect your ability to function.

Signs that something more serious could be going on are feeling sad and tearful, having difficulty sleeping, having difficulty getting out of the house, or having anxiety and intrusive thoughts that can be very scary or distressing.

Fiona:

The hormones, I had no idea. I knew, but I always thought I would have some control over it.

I remember every night I could feel myself getting anxious and getting depressed. And I would spiral.

It was just losing control and not even wanting to take care of my baby.

It was important to me to sterilize his bottles. And I knew there was a problem because I would sterilize and be sterilizing it a fourth time and he would be crying all the time. And I just couldn't get to him. I just had to do it a fifth time, a sixth time, a seventh time. And that's when I knew I needed help.

Marnie:

We had taken my son, Simon, with us to our friend's apartment.

Normally, I love meeting new people. I love socializing. I'm an extrovert. And the energy it took for me to put on this happy face and introduce myself, it was so draining.

I remember barely making it to the door before I just broke down in tears.

And that was the first time where I experienced suicidal thoughts. We were driving on the highway and I just was staring out the window, picturing what it would be like to drive the car off the road.

And so I share that openly because you're not thinking clearly when you're in it. You're just taken over by that darkness.

Michelle Gebhardt, MD:

If you're having thoughts of suicide or thoughts of harming yourself your baby or others,

it's really important to seek help immediately. Let your care team know. You can also call 988, which is the National Suicide Hotline. And if you think you're having a medical or psychiatric emergency, call 911 right away or go to the nearest emergency room.

Marnie:

It is so brave to reach out and ask for support. And that could be to your partner, to a friend or family member, or provider. Ideally, all of those people, because you can't do it alone.

Michelle Gebhardt, MD:

If you're having challenges, you can reach out to your care team by email or telephone call.

You can also go to [kp.org/mentalhealth](http://kp.org/mentalhealth) where you can learn more how to get care and also take a depression self-questionnaire.

We offer lots of different models of care, and that can include one-on-one therapy, or connecting with other moms struggling with the same issues in group settings. We also have really good, safe, effective treatment medications as well.

Cathy:

No matter what you're going through, talk to someone. Express how you feel, whether it's... you're super excited or you're really sad.

It might come slow, it might come fast, but it will get better.