

Raising awareness for postpartum depression

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This article is intended for OB/GYNs, primary care providers, family practitioners, nurse practitioners, pediatricians, and behavioral health providers

One out of seven new mothers struggles with postpartum depression, which can affect their behavior and physical health. Of the women who screen positive for the condition, 78 percent don't receive behavioral health treatment.

Early detection and treatment are important to preserving the well-being of both the mother and baby. Once detected, about 90 percent of women who have postpartum depression can be treated with medication or psychotherapy. Because women who have struggled with the condition are more likely to go through it again in following pregnancies, it's best to treat symptoms as soon as possible.

Connecting women and doctors is key

We spoke to mothers and experts who agree that building awareness is the first step to improving outcomes for new mothers and their families. See their experience with postpartum depression: [A helping hand for new moms](#).

Identifying and treating postpartum depression

We'd like to remind you about behavioral health resources available to help our new mothers get the help they need.

- Tools like the [Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale](#) and the [Patient Health Questionnaire-9](#) are designed to detect postpartum depression by asking about your patient's mood, symptoms, and behavior changes.
- [Massachusetts Child Psychiatry Access Programs \(MCPAP\)](#) introduced MCPAP for Moms to support doctors who serve pregnant and postpartum women and their children (up to one year after delivery). MCPAP is free to all primary care providers. The program works to:
 - Provide real-time perinatal psychiatric consultations, resources, and referrals
 - Connect their patients with behavioral health services and support groups

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