

Breastfeeding & Maternal Mental Health



Breastfeeding *benefits* extend beyond physical nourishment; it can support *emotional health, bonding,* and overall mental *well-being*.

♥ Benefits

Hormonal Support

- Breastfeeding promotes relaxation, bonding, and stress relief.
- Prolactin promotes calm and nurturing feelings.

Empowerment & Confidence

- Breastfeeding success builds confidence, self-esteem, and a sense of fulfillment.
- Feeling capable in caring for your baby strengthens emotional resilience.

Lower Risk of Postpartum Depression

- Breastfeeding can lower postpartum depression.
- Physical and emotional connection improves mood and reduces anxiety.
- Breastfeeding may help support more regular sleep.

Experiences vary, and support matters.

Mother-Infant Bonding

- Skin-to-skin and eye contact strengthen emotional connection.
- Bonding builds caregiving confidence and fulfillment.

Stress Reduction

- Breastfeeding lowers stress hormone levels.
- Feeding times create moments of calmness and connection.

Breastfeeding can benefit mental well-being, but *all mothers* need mental health support.
Every journey is different.



Taking Care of Your Mental Health While Breastfeeding

- ✓ Ask for help from a provider, lactation consultant, or support group.
- ✓ Rest when you can and eat regular meals.
- ✓ Talk about how you're feeling with someone you trust.
- ✓ Get support if sadness, worry, or exhaustion does not go away.



When to Seek Professional Support

If you experience:

- Ongoing sadness or hopelessness
- Loss of interest in life
- Excessive worry or panic
- Trouble bonding with your baby

*Early support benefits mom and baby.
Seeking help is a sign of strength.*

Treating mental health matters. Many mental health medications are compatible with breastfeeding. **Talk with your provider about safe options.** You can also contact the InfantRisk Center at 806-352-2519.



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