

My Support & Help-Seeking Plan

Taking care of your emotional well-being is an essential part of pregnancy and postpartum recovery. During pregnancy, hormonal changes, physical discomfort, and the anticipation of becoming a parent can bring a wide range of emotions, from excitement and joy to worry and stress. After birth, adjusting to life with a newborn may add fatigue, uncertainty, and new responsibilities. Supporting emotional health early can improve overall well-being, strengthen bonding with your baby, and help you manage daily challenges during both pregnancy and the postpartum period (Val et al., 2025).

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG, 2018) recommends that all women be screened for depression and anxiety during pregnancy and after birth and have access to mental health support if needed. This includes talking with your healthcare provider about mood changes, fatigue, irritability, or feelings of sadness. Emotional support can take many forms, including counseling, peer support groups, trusted friends or family, relaxation exercises, and practical help with daily tasks. Recognizing early signs of emotional distress and seeking support is not a sign of weakness. It is a vital step in recovery and overall well-being. Planning for emotional care alongside physical recovery can help you feel more confident, supported, and prepared to navigate both pregnancy and the postpartum period.



Early Warning Signs

It is normal to experience emotional ups and downs during pregnancy and the postpartum period. Hormonal changes, physical recovery, sleep disruption, and the adjustment to new responsibilities can all affect how you feel. However, if certain feelings become persistent, intense, or begin to interfere with your daily functioning, it may be a sign that additional support would be helpful. Recognizing these signs early allows you to seek support sooner and promotes healthier recovery. Check any that you notice:

- Persistent sadness or low mood
- Crying more often than usual
- Feeling disconnected from yourself or your baby
- Racing or intrusive thoughts
- Feeling anxious or constantly worried
- Loss of interest or pleasure in things you normally enjoy
- Irritability or mood swings
- Feeling hopeless or overwhelmed

If I notice these signs, I will:

Practical Support Plan

Practical support from others, such as help with meals, childcare, or household tasks, improves recovery and reduces stress during the postpartum period (Walker et al., 2022). Planning for support can make daily life more manageable and give you time to focus on your physical and emotional well-being. Use the space below to list friends, family, neighbors, or local support services. Even one reliable contact in each area can make a meaningful difference in your recovery.

Meals:

Night support:

Household help:
