

# 4TH TRIMESTER CARE

## Quick Tips for Emotional Wellness During Pregnancy and After Birth

Remember you are not alone! Accept help from those around you and seek help if needed.

Give yourself permission to do less and let help in.

Give yourself credit for all you DO do; it's always more than you think.

Think SNOWBALL!

**SLEEP** Longer stretches regulate mood. Aim for 4-6 hour stretch as soon as baby can go longer between feedings. Ask your partner or family/friend to take a feeding or nap when baby sleeps.

**NUTRITION** Avoid sweets, processed foods, and alcohol. Eat protein at each meal/snack. Ask a partner/friend to prepare easy to grab healthy foods to snack on during the day. Have family/friends drop off meals for you and your family.

**OMEGA 3'S** Proven to prevent and reduce anxiety and depression in new moms. Up to 3000mg combined with EPA and DHA are safe during pregnancy and nursing. Some examples of Omega rich foods are fish, dark leafy green vegetables, walnuts, and tofu.

**WALK** Daily exercise, such as stretching, walking, or yoga improve the mood and good for your body.

**BREAKS** Ideally two hours, two to three times a week away from children is a good break. Try to get breaks when you can for self-care. You can't pour from an empty vessel. Partake in activities that are life giving to you. Even 15 minutes a day helps.

**ADULT TIME** Find safe people to share with regularly about how you feel and your experiences.

**LIQUIDS** Aim for 64 oz of water per day. Dehydration can trigger anxiety and brain fog. Dehydration can happen quickly, especially when breast feeding. It is easier to stay ahead then try to catch up.

**LAUGHTER** Watch a funny show, talk to a good friend, tickle children, make time for silliness. If you have a hard time accessing laughter and joy, seek counseling. Suffering in silence hurts everyone. You deserve to be well. Depression caught and treated early on is easier to deal with than if you wait for it to get worse. Treatments vary in many ways, it is not always necessarily medication.

*Perinatal Mood or Anxiety Disorders can look like many different things and vary greatly.*

Baby Blues: 75-80% of new moms experience the baby blues which can start 2-3 days postpartum

Postpartum Depression (PPD): 15% of new moms experience PPD

Postpartum Panic Anxiety: 10% of woman postpartum experience an anxiety disorder

Postpartum Psychosis: 1-2 of every 1,000 women experience sudden psychotic symptoms, usually in the first couple of weeks after birth

### ARE YOU...

- Feeling overwhelmed or guilty
- Afraid you're a bad mom
- Having trouble bonding with your baby
- Having racing thoughts & restlessness
- Having scary or disturbing thoughts
- Afraid to be alone with your baby
- Feeling the need to constantly check things
- Feeling confused or scared
- Feeling irritated or angry
- Feeling nothing or empty
- Feeling overwhelming sadness
- Feeling hopeless
- Feeling a sense of dread
- Having trouble eating and sleeping
- Having trouble concentrating
- Feeling disconnected
- Thinking that something is wrong
- Thinking of running away
- Thinking of hurting yourself
- Afraid this is your new "forever"
- Afraid to reach out because someone will judge you

### REMIND YOURSELF...

- I am a good person
- I am a good mother
- This is not my fault
- My symptoms are treatable
- I deserve to feel better

### RESOURCES *(and credit for this information)*

Terra's Place - [www.terrasplaceaz.com](http://www.terrasplaceaz.com) 1-855-483-7727

Postpartum Support International-AZ Chapter - [www.psiarizona.org](http://www.psiarizona.org) Warmline (888) 434-MOMS (6667)

Jenny's Light - [www.jennyslight.org](http://www.jennyslight.org)

# THE "5 S'S" TO HELP SOOTH BABY

*"Inside the uterus they get constant holding and rocking, and the noise in there actually is louder than a vacuum cleaner. Then suddenly they are born and it's quiet and still. So the best way to activate a baby's calming reflex is to emulate the movements and noises that babies experience inside the uterus." Harvey Karp, M.D., assistant professor of pediatrics at UCLA*

**SWADDLING:** Tight swaddling provides the continuous touching and support the fetus experienced while still in the womb.

**SIDE OR STOMACH POSITION:** Karp recommends placing a baby on her left side to help with digestion, or on her stomach to provide reassuring support. Once the baby is sleeping peacefully, you can turn her onto her back, which experts say is the safest sleep position in preventing Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).

**SHUSHING SOUNDS:** These sounds imitate the continual whooshing sound made by the blood flowing through arteries near the womb. Karp recommends parents run a vacuum cleaner or hair dryer a safe distance from the baby until she falls asleep, then leave a fan or another form of white noise on while she sleeps.

**SWINGING:** Every movement mom made while baby was in utero created a swinging motion in the womb. Rocking, swinging movements, car rides and using an infant swing can all help soothe a baby.

**SUCKING:** Sucking has its effects deep within the nervous system. It triggers the calming reflex and releases natural chemicals within the brain. This can be accomplished by allowing the baby to suck on the breast, a bottle, a pacifier or even a finger.