Here to help

If you feel you may be suffering from depression, or if you just want to talk about available resources, call and make an appointment with our experienced counselor. Contact the Mood Assessment Clinic if:

- You have a personal or family history of depression, premenstrual mood changes or are stressed by financial, emotional or other factors
- You have been taking medication for depression, but don’t know if you should stop or continue while you are pregnant
- You want to know if your feelings are normal or not
- You have suffered from one or more of the following symptoms every day for at least two weeks:
  - Feelings of worthlessness or guilt
  - Loss of appetite or overeating
  - Loss of interest in activities you previously enjoyed
  - Anxiety or panic attacks

Our staff takes the time to listen to you and understand how you are feeling.

Pregnancy and Postpartum Mood Assessment Clinic

Providing comprehensive counseling and information for pregnant women and new mothers.

UCSF Medical Center
Women’s Health

Pregnancy and Postpartum Mood Assessment Clinic

400 Parnassus Ave., Floor B1
San Francisco, CA 94143
(415) 353-2566
www.ucsfhealth.org/moods
Speak up when you’re feeling down

It’s hard to know what’s normal during and immediately after pregnancy. You are changing physically, hormonally, emotionally and socially. While pregnancy and birth are joyful occasions, they are also times of increased stress—which puts you at a higher risk for depression. Depression or anxiety, left untreated, can interfere with your baby’s mental and emotional development. If you’re depressed, you may seek less prenatal care. You may experience a loss of appetite or overeat. You may use drugs or alcohol to dull your emotional pain. Untreated depression can put you at risk for a miscarriage, delivering before your due date, or for giving birth to a baby below its healthy weight.

Postpartum blues

During the first two weeks after delivery, most women experience emotional highs and lows, called “postpartum blues,” caused in part by fluctuating hormone levels. Although difficult and confusing, this is normal and part of adjusting to a new baby.

If your condition continues for more than two weeks or worsens, you may have a more serious condition called postpartum depression. Without treatment, it can continue for over a year and may interfere with your ability to parent effectively.

Signs of postpartum depression may include:

- Anxiety or panic attacks
- Difficulty feeling close to your baby, or feeling overly involved or “obsessed” with everything connected to your baby
- Difficulty sleeping or eating
- Isolating yourself
- Feeling like a failure as a mother
- Feeling angry, guilty, irritable, sad or overwhelmed
- Thoughts of harming yourself or your baby

We provide support and resources tailored to your individual needs.

Depression is a treatable condition

Treatment for depression can include individual therapy, group support and education, as well as medication. Many antidepressant medications can be taken safely during pregnancy and while breastfeeding.

We offer in-depth consultations specific to each patient’s unique needs, including:

- Assessing your symptoms with a licensed mental health professional
- Providing information about supportive resources, including treatment options
- A safe space where you will be listened to with compassion and respect

Additional resources

“What to Do if You’re Just Not Glowing: Emotional Aspects of Pregnancy and Postpartum.” This workshop offers an opportunity to ask questions and also addresses treatment options including support groups, relaxation classes, therapy and the pros and cons of medication. For more information, call the UCSF Great Expectations Pregnancy Program.

UCSF Great Expectations Pregnancy Program . . . . . . . . . . . . . . (415) 353-2667

Make an appointment

Call the UCSF Pregnancy and Postpartum Mood Assessment Clinic to schedule an appointment.

UCSF Pregnancy and Postpartum Mood Assessment Clinic . . (415) 353-2566