



Mills Perinatal Wellness Group, PC

What are Postpartum and Perinatal OCD?

Research shows that women who are pregnant, or who have recently given birth, are at an increased risk of developing OCD symptoms. If they already have OCD, the obsessions and compulsions may worsen during this time. In pOCD, the obsessions and compulsions usually focus on the newborn (or unborn) infant. It is estimated that as many as 3-5% of new mothers and some new fathers will experience these symptoms. The repetitive, intrusive images and thoughts are very frightening and can feel like they come “out of the blue.” Research has shown that these images are anxious in nature, not delusional, and have very low risk of being acted upon. It is far more likely that the parent with this symptom takes steps to avoid triggers and avoid what they fear is potential harm to the baby.

Signs and Symptoms of OCD
Feelings
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Excessive worry● Fear of being left alone with the baby
Intrusive Thoughts
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Obsessions, also called intrusive thoughts, which are persistent, repetitive thoughts or mental images related to the baby. These thoughts are very upsetting and not something the woman has ever experienced before.● Thoughts of harm coming to the baby (physical or sexual harm)
Compulsive Behaviors
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Compulsions, where the mom may do certain things over and over again to reduce her fears and obsessions. This may include things like needing to clean constantly, check things many times, count or reorder things● Hypervigilant