



Mills Perinatal Wellness Group, PC

What is Birth Trauma?

'Birth trauma' is a wound or damage experienced during or after childbirth. While trauma can be physical, it may also be emotional or psychological. The emotional impact of birth trauma is often due to a difference between your expectation of labor and birth and what actually happened. It can also affect your non-birthing partner.

At the time of birth, you may have felt unsupported, helpless or unheard. After the birth, it's possible to feel shocked or numb and this can lead to anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Your trauma is valid, and although everyone experiences trauma differently, it is not uncommon. It has been estimated that up to 1 in 3 people who give birth may experience birth trauma.

You may find the experience of childbirth emotionally traumatic even when there was no physical trauma.

Risk Factors for Birth Trauma
Risk factors during the labor and birth include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● experiencing pain or physical stress● not receiving enough pain relief● experiencing emotional distress or worries that you were going to die● needing medical intervention● being unprepared for the difficult sensations, emotions and interventions you experienced● feeling a loss of control or not being respected
Risk factors existing prior to the labor and birth include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● previous sexual or other abuse● mental health concerns● pre-existing physical birth injuries● previous stillbirth or difficult pregnancy● not receiving enough pain relief in a previous labor