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Talking therapies for  
new parents

For a better life



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## Psychological support in the perinatal stage

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Having a baby can be a joyful, exciting and rewarding experience. However, adjusting to pregnancy and having a baby can be exhausting and difficult. It is therefore common for pregnant women and new parents to experience mental ill-health during the perinatal period, which starts with conception and ends when their baby is two years.

As many as one in five women experience emotional difficulties during pregnancy and in the first year after giving birth. This can happen to anyone.

Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) services offer free, confidential, talking therapies including cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) for people who are experiencing symptoms of common mental ill-health, such as anxiety or depression.

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## It is common for pregnant women and new parents to experience:

- Low mood, sadness and tearfulness
- Anxiety, worry and tension
- Irritability and anger
- Difficult or unexpected feelings towards the pregnancy or your baby
- Poor sleep even when your baby is sleeping well
- Feeling unable to cope or enjoy anything
- Thoughts that you are not a good enough parent
- Worrying thoughts about your baby
- Anxiety about labour, or struggling to come to terms with a difficult labour

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## Seeking help

It can be difficult to talk about how you are feeling and reach out for help.

- You may not know what is wrong
- You may feel ashamed that you aren't enjoying your pregnancy or baby, or you are not coping as you believe you should
- You may feel you have to manage on your own

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## Struggling emotionally at this time can happen to anyone

Asking for help doesn't mean that you cannot cope or are unable to care for your child. It is the start of seeking and getting the right help and support, to ensure that you can be the parent you want to be.

It is very rare for babies to be taken away from their parents, so you should not worry about this. IAPT providers will work with a parent that may be getting support from other agencies if the service is appropriate and helpful to them.

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## How an IAPT service can help you

IAPT services provide short-term talking therapy and give you space to talk about your feelings and experiences around your pregnancy and after giving birth.

The IAPT services offer various types of talking therapy, including:

- One-to-one or group cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
- Online one-to-one CBT
- One-to-one counselling
- Guided self-help sessions

Your needs will be assessed and you will explore with a therapist the most suitable therapy to meet your needs.



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## What to expect when you contact an IAPT service

You will be asked for some brief details about yourself and how you are feeling. A time will be arranged for you to speak to a therapist. Typically, this appointment will be booked within a few days and this may happen face to face, over the phone or online.

The first appointment is about finding out about you and your current difficulties. This helps to decide how best to plan your care with you and what therapy options may be suitable.

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## How to contact IAPT services

The service is available for anyone over 18 years and you can refer yourself without having to see a healthcare professional first. You can also speak to your GP, midwife or health visitor who can also help you to refer yourself to the service.

IAPT services are aware that pregnancy and the first year of your baby's life are important times, so they will aim to offer you an assessment and treatment as soon as possible.

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## Surrey IAPT providers

The following providers offer you a choice of locations, date and time to meet your therapist and help identify the best therapy to suit your needs.

Centre for Psychology  
01483 901429  
[www.centreforpsychology.co.uk](http://www.centreforpsychology.co.uk)

Dorking Healthcare  
01483 906392  
[www.dhctalkingtherapies.co.uk](http://www.dhctalkingtherapies.co.uk)

Ieso Digital Health  
0800 074 5560  
[www.iesohealth.com/surrey](http://www.iesohealth.com/surrey)

Mind Matters  
Surrey and Borders Partnership NHS Foundation Trust  
0300 330 5450  
[www.mindmattersnhs.co.uk](http://www.mindmattersnhs.co.uk)

Talking Therapies Surrey  
0300 365 2000  
[www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/surreyonline](http://www.berkshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/surreyonline)

ThinkAction  
0300 012 0012  
[www.thinkaction.org.uk](http://www.thinkaction.org.uk)  
Text 'TALK' to 82085