

# Prenatal Depression

## Self care

**Prenatal** depression refers to a series of physiological and psychological changes during pregnancy. Symptoms of prenatal depression include:

- a sense of sadness
- crying easily
- changes in appetite and sleep patterns
- lack of concentration,
- lose interest or pleasure in things that was once enjoyable
- recurring thoughts of death, suicide, or hopelessness.

In general, prenatal depression is caused by the following reasons:

- first time pregnancy
- unprepared pregnancy
- lack of understanding in pregnancy
- excessive worry about foetus health and development
- excessive worry about gender of the foetus
- worry on education and upbringing of the future of the child
- poor marital relationship and problems with the in-laws
- pregnancy-induced hypertension or diabetes,
- financial burden
- worry about changes in terms of life after giving birth to baby

Prenatal depression is highly treatable with appropriate treatment from psychiatrist and psychologist. Along with medical and psychotherapy, patients can also try the below self-help skills to make themselves feel better, such as:

**1. Embracing the inner feelings**  
Most people were taught to use rationale to solve a problem. They have never accepted and observe



their feelings. They are busy solving the problems and neglect the inner feelings thus going straight to the problems have become the norm.

**Suggestions:**  
Accept that all of us are human beings with joy, anger, sadness, worry, fear etc. Take time to be alone in a quiet place. You may watch some videos or listen to some music to channel out your stress through tears. After channeling out your emotion, hug yourself and tell yourself you are worth it and that you love yourself.

**2. Nourish your body**  
Spending time in the nature such as the forest, beach or park relaxes the body and soul. Mornign sunlights is beneficial to our body as it keeps us warm.

A healthy diet affects how we think and feel so we should increase our intake on fruits and vegetables. Eating slowly and drinking more water together with sufficient exercise will nourish the body. It is recommended to have your meals in a happy mood surrounded by friends and family.

Choose an exercise that you are

interested in. This can be walking, swimming, shopping, or chatting with your friends over a drink. The main point is to feel relaxed. If you want to stay in door, you can tidy your home; do some gardening and cooking, knitting and preparing baby necessities for the newborn.

When you feel tired or stressed, take more rest and do deep breathing exercises to calm your body and soul.

**3. being mindful in the present moment**  
It does not help to keep replaying unpleasant thoughts or worry of being alone. If you keep worrying, you will forget to live in the present.

**Suggestions:**  
Always remind yourself that “present moment is the best moment”

Set a new goal and stop thinking of unhappy memories in the past or worries in the future. Learn to observe and enjoy your surrounding now. Fill yourself with lovely music and beautiful things.

Practice the power of blessing. Always bless yourself and your baby with love and happiness. Be grateful every day. May you and your baby be well and happy.

Prevention is better than cure. You can stay away from prenatal depression as long as you watch out for early signs of depression. You will be on your way to a life filled with laughter and happiness.