

FACT SHEET

Pregnancy & Postpartum Psychosis (PPP)

MAY 2022

MMHLA
Maternal Mental Health
Leadership Alliance



KEY POINTS

- > Pregnancy and postpartum psychosis (PPP) are medical emergencies, with the mother needing immediate medical care including thorough assessment, intervention, and treatment.¹
- > PPP impacts an estimated 1-2 women per 1,000 births.²
- > The onset of psychosis is usually sudden, often within the first 2-3 weeks following childbirth. Psychosis can also occur during pregnancy and immediately following childbirth.³
- > A woman is 23 times more likely to experience psychosis in the month following childbirth than at any other point in her life.⁴
- > The most significant risk factors for PPP are a personal or family history of bipolar disorder, or a previous psychotic episode. However, up to 50% of those who experience PPP have no personal or family history of mental illness.^{3,5}
- > There is an estimated 4% infanticide risk and 5% suicide risk associated with PPP.^{3,5}

TREATMENT

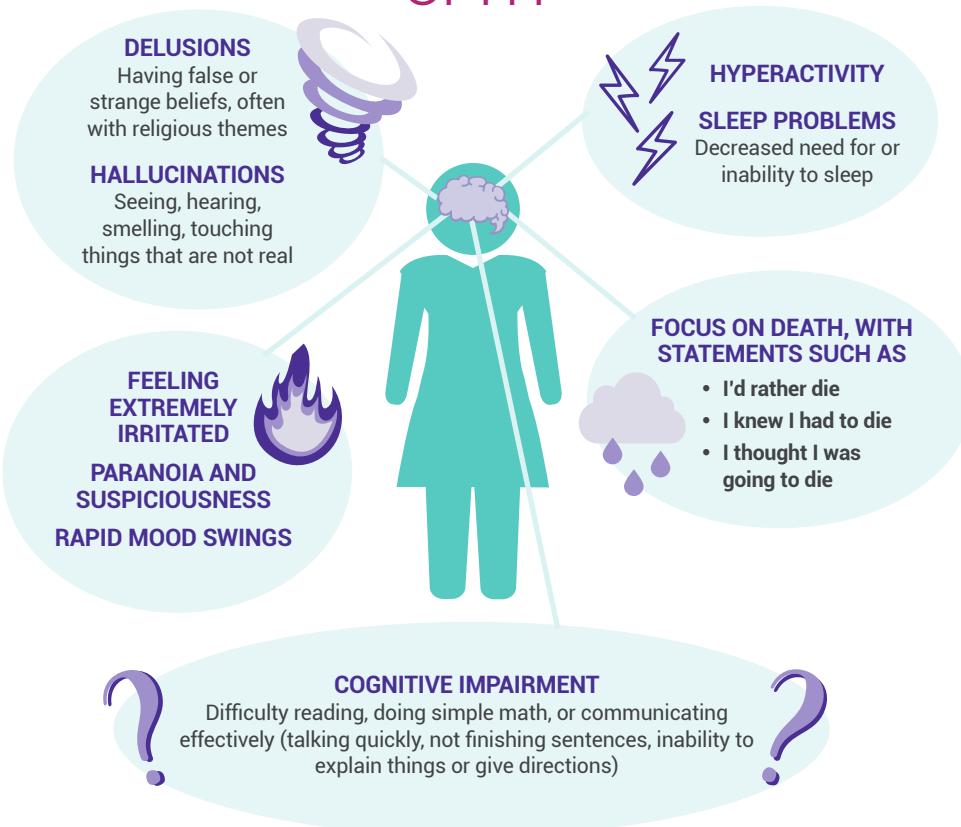
Treatment for PPP almost always includes a combination of:

**Hospitalization
Medication
Therapy**

Find a list of intensive treatment programs at bit.ly/PPPtreat

PREGNANCY & POSTPARTUM PSYCHOSIS ARE TEMPORARY AND TREATABLE, BUT REQUIRE IMMEDIATE HELP

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF PPP



GET INVOLVED



PPP Awareness Day is the first Friday each May. Join advocates in raising awareness about and funds to support pregnancy and postpartum psychosis awareness.

Learn more at cherishedmom.org and follow on [Facebook](#)

Citations

- 1 Postpartum Support International, [Position Statement on Postpartum Psychosis](#).
- 2 Vanderkruik et al. BMC Psychiatry (2017). 17:272.
- 3 Postpartum Support International, [Webpage on Postpartum Psychosis](#)
- 4 Bergink et al. Am J Psychiatry (2016). 173(12):1179-1188.
- 5 Massachusetts General Hospital, [Postpartum Psychosis Project Website](#).

PREGNANCY & POSTPARTUM PSYCHOSIS RESOURCES



POSTPARTUM SUPPORT INTERNATIONAL

PSI provides the following:

- List of [PPP resources](#)
- Peer support for those impacted by PPP and their families
- [List of intensive treatment programs](#)

PSI has a Postpartum Psychosis Task Force led by individuals with lived experience and includes providers with expertise treating PPP; researchers; advocates for legislative change; and PSI staff and board members.

The Task Force organizes around actions to improve public and provider awareness; increase and improve resources; reduce stigma; and provide legal and legislative advocacy.

The goal of the Task Force is to develop resources and integrate knowledge and sensitivity about the lived experience of PPP—as well as the unique insights of survivor-advocates—into all perinatal mental health advocacy, awareness, education, resources, and services.



Action on Postpartum Psychosis is a British organization providing the following resources:

- List of PPP resources and trainings
- Peer support for those impacted by PPP and their families
- [Recovery After Postpartum Psychosis](#)
- [Postpartum Psychosis: A Guide for Partners](#)
- [Planning Pregnancy: A Guide for Women at High Risk for Postpartum Psychosis](#)



MGH CENTER for Women's Mental Health

Reproductive Psychiatry Resource & Information Center

Postpartum Psychosis Project

This comprehensive program includes:

- Research into the genetics of PPP
- Resources for those impacted by PPP
- Research summaries
- Survivor stories
- Consultation line for medical providers caring for those experiencing PPP

RECOGNIZING AND MANAGING POSTPARTUM PSYCHOSIS: A CLINICAL GUIDE FOR OBSTETRIC PROVIDERS
bit.ly/nih-ppguide

LEARN MORE ABOUT PREGNANCY & POSTPARTUM PSYCHOSIS

FILM

NOT CAROL is a documentary that examines postpartum psychosis through the prism of Carol Coronado, who tragically took the lives of her three young daughters while suffering postpartum psychosis. Carol's story shines a light on the public health epidemic of severe postpartum mental health illnesses including postpartum psychosis.

STAGE

Playing Monopoly With God is a one-woman show featuring comedienne and storyteller Melissa Bangs, who tells her story of surviving postpartum psychosis with humor and self-love. Melissa's hope is that by sharing her lived experience, others will be inspired to shed their shame and tell their own true stories.

WEBSITES

Action on Postpartum Psychosis (UK): app-network.org

A Review of Postpartum Psychosis (2021): bit.ly/ppp-review

Massachusetts General Hospital Postpartum Psychosis Project: bit.ly/massgenppp

BOOKS

A Mother's Climb Out of Darkness: A Story about Overcoming Postpartum Psychosis

By Jennifer Hentz Moyer

BETH: A Story of Postpartum Psychosis

By Shirley Cervene Halvorson

INFERNO: A Memoir of Motherhood and Madness

By Catherine Cho

Insanity's Shoes: My Running Trip Through Postpartum Psychosis

By Angela Tompkins

Runaway Mom: A Race to Regain My Sanity After Bipolar-Induced Postpartum Psychosis

By Maggie Reese

Setting the Wire: A Memoir of Postpartum Psychosis

By Sarah C. Townsend

Sixteen Days in a Psych Ward: How to Notice the Signs of Postpartum Depression and Psychosis

By Trina Holmes

Understanding Postpartum Psychosis: A Temporary Madness

By Teresa M. Twomey, JD

MMHLA thanks Kristina Dulaney, Teresa Twomey, and The California Health Care Foundation for assistance in creating this fact sheet.

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