SHADES of BLUE PROJECT

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Postpartum psychosis

Act now. Do not wait for an appointment.

Suspected postpartum psychosis needs immediate medical evaluation. Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department now. [1]

01 Recognize urgent changes

- Severe confusion, hearing or seeing things others do not, or unusual fixed beliefs can signal postpartum psychosis. [1]
- Symptoms can appear suddenly and change quickly. The person may not recognize that anything is wrong. [2]
- A threat of harm does not have to be stated. Suspected psychosis needs emergency care without delay. [1]

02 Know signs of mania

- Unusually high or intensely irritable mood, racing thoughts, rapid speech, and impulsive behavior need urgent assessment after birth. [1, 3]
- Feeling energized with very little need for sleep differs from wanting sleep but being awakened by a baby. [3]
- Severe symptoms, unsafe behavior, or losing contact with reality require emergency care. Tell clinicians about recent childbirth. [1]

03 Help protect safety

- Stay with the person if safe for you. Arrange another trusted adult to care for the baby.
- Do not leave the affected person alone with the baby. Speak calmly and avoid arguing about unusual beliefs.
- Share symptoms, sleep changes, medicines, and bipolar disorder or psychosis history. Do not change psychiatric medicines without clinical guidance. [1, 2]

Recovery is possible with treatment. Rest and community support do not replace emergency medical care. [1]

A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Find support shadesofblueproject.org/support **Request services →**

U.S. immediate danger or suspected psychosis: call 911 or go to an emergency department. **Suicidal crisis or emotional distress:** call 988 or text 988.

Maternal support: call or text 1 833 852 6262. Free, confidential, 24/7. HRSA. Not a crisis line.

Sources [1] NIMH Perinatal Depression and Postpartum Psychosis [2] NHS Postpartum Psychosis [3] NIMH Bipolar Disorder

Educational information, not a diagnosis. Updated November 17, 2026.