



Help and emotional support during pregnancy and the first year after having a baby

Having a baby can be joyful, exciting and rewarding. However, it is also common for pregnant women and new mothers or fathers to experience anxiety, depression or emotional distress.

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

Every London borough has an IAPT service which offers free, confidential talking therapy for people who have symptoms of anxiety or depression. IAPT stands for 'Improving Access to Psychological Therapy'. They give priority to pregnant women and new parents. This leaflet explains more about the service and the help we can offer you if you need it.

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 your pregnancy or baby
- Poor sleep even when your baby sleeps 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.

Asking for help

It can be difficult to talk about how you are feeling and ask for help. Common reasons for this are:

- You may not know what is wrong
- You may feel ashamed that you are not enjoying your baby or coping as you believe you should
- You may worry that your baby will be taken away.

Struggling emotionally at this time can happen to anyone. It is not your fault.

Asking for help doesn't mean you can't cope or are not able to care for your child. It's the start of getting the right help and support to ensure you can be the parent you want to be. It is very rare for babies to be taken away from parents, so you should not worry about this.

How an IAPT service can help you

IAPT offers short-term talking therapy to give you space to talk. The types of therapy offered will vary depending on your local IAPT service. These may include guided self-help sessions with a therapist, cognitive behaviour therapy, couples therapy and counselling.

How to contact IAPT

You can refer yourself to IAPT by phoning your local service directly. Contact details for all London services can be found at the end of this leaflet. You may find it hard to contact us yourself. In this case, ask your midwife, health visitor, friends or a family member to help you make that first call. Your GP can also make the referral. We know that pregnancy and the first year of your baby's birth is a very important time. We will offer you an assessment and treatment as soon as possible.

What to expect when you contact IAPT

When you first telephone you will be asked for some brief details. A time will be arranged for you to speak to one of the therapists. This appointment will be booked as soon as possible, usually within a few days. The first appointment is to find out about your current difficulties. This helps us decide how we can best help you. At the end of the appointment, we will discuss the support options available and agree a plan.

All IAPT services aim to be flexible. We want to make it as easy as possible for you to get the help you need. You can often bring your baby to sessions if you want to. Services usually offer you a choice of locations for your appointment, sometimes in antenatal clinics or children's centres.

Find your local IAPT service

Borough	Telephone	Website
Barking & Dagenham	0300 300 1554 option 3	nelft.nhs.uk/services-talking-therapies
Barnet	0300 222 5940	mindmattersnhs.co.uk
Bexley	020 8303 5816	mindinbexley.org.uk
Brent	020 8206 3924	cnwltalkingtherapies.org
Bromley	0300 003 3000	bromleyworkingforwellbeing.org.uk
Camden	020 3317 6670	icope.nhs.uk
Croydon	020 3228 4040	slam-iapt.nhs.uk
Ealing	020 3313 5660	ealingiapt.co.uk
Enfield	020 8342 3012	lets-talk-iapt.nhs.uk
Greenwich	020 3260 1100	oxleas.nhs.uk/gttt
Hackney	020 7683 4278	cityandhackneytalkingtherapy.nhs.uk
Hammersmith & Fulham	0300 123 1156	backontrack.nhs.uk
Haringey East	020 8808 5833	lets-talk-iapt.nhs.uk
Haringey West	020 3074 2299	lets-talk-iapt.nhs.uk
Harrow	020 8515 5015	cnwltalkingtherapies.org
Havering	0300 555 1082	mytalkingtherapies.org.uk
Hillingdon	01895 206585	cnwltalkingtherapies.org
Hounslow	0300 123 0739	hounslowiapt.nhs.uk
Islington	020 3317 7252	icope.nhs.uk
Kensington & Chelsea	020 8206 8700	cnwltalkingtherapies.org
Kingston	020 8339 8040	kingstonwellbeingservice.org
Lambeth	020 3228 6747	slam-iapt.nhs.uk
Lewisham	020 3049 2000	slam-iapt.nhs.uk
Merton	020 3823 9063	thinkaction.org.uk/get-help/addaction-mental-health-services/miapt
Newham	020 8475 8080	newhamtalkingtherapies.nhs.uk
Redbridge	0300 555 1220	mytalkingtherapies.org.uk
Richmond	0208 548 5550	www.richmondwellbeingservice.nhs.uk
Southwark	020 3228 2194	slam-iapt.nhs.uk
Sutton	0800 032 1411	suttonuplift.co.uk
Tower Hamlets	020 7791 3667	healthservices.org.uk
Waltham Forest	0300 5551267	mytalkingtherapies.org.uk
Wandsworth	0203 5136264	talkwandsworth.nhs.uk
Westminster	030 3333 0000	cnwl-iapt.uk/wm1-westminster

This leaflet was developed in collaboration with the London IAPT leads and the London Perinatal Mental Health Network and supported by Healthy London Partnership and London Clinical Networks.