

The **PPMD** Connection



News from the Peel Postpartum Mood Disorder Committee

PPMD Update

New!

A new page has been added to the PMDinPeel.ca website that is designed specifically for women and family members titled...

[Mothers & Others](#)

It was created so families can access answers to frequently asked questions about PMD.

My goal is to continue to expand the site content and features therefore I would be happy to have your input about additional Q & A that you would like to see added or any other suggestions you may have for the site.



Coordinator's Corner

Fall 2009

In my last update I mentioned the group of dedicated volunteers who have been working hard to create a Volunteer Peer Education Program. I hoped to report a November launch of this initiative, which will deliver community based workshops about PMD. As a result of being redeployed to H1N1 flu immunization work, I will be unavailable to train the volunteers in November as anticipated. We will reschedule the volunteer training for the New Year and proceed with launching the program shortly after. In the meantime if you know of anyone who may be interested in becoming a Volunteer Peer Educator and has personally experienced PMD please direct them to call **Peel Volunteer Resources at 905-791-7700** for further information.

The PMD Program will be advised this November whether we were successful in obtaining funding from Trillium Foundation to support the PMD Telephone Support Line. If we are successful we hope to recruit a **Volunteer/Community Outreach Coordinator** to coordinate the delivery of the Postpartum Mood Disorder Telephone Support Line. Contact me if you would like more information about the role.

Monica Irwin, PMD Specialist
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Obsessive Thoughts are Common in PMD

Pregnancy and the postpartum period can trigger the start or worsening of obsessive thoughts. Obsessive thoughts are recurrent, intrusive thoughts or images that cause anxiety or distress.

Obsessions of new and expectant mothers tend to focus on harm coming to the baby such as suffocation, illness, abduction and falls. They can also include thoughts about intentionally harming the baby by shaking, stabbing, drowning and smothering. In pregnancy the thoughts may include fears of contamination, birth defects or miscarriage.

Women often won't talk about these symptoms because of fear that others will not understand, that they will frighten loved ones or that their children will be taken away. These thoughts are very disturbing to women and family yet they are unlikely to cause harm to their child. The terrible news stories about mothers taking their child's life are usually associated with postpartum psychosis. The table on the next page highlights some key differences between obsessive thoughts and psychosis. ***(Continued on next page)***

Steering Committee Members: Best Start Health Coalition in Peel • Caledon Parent /Child Centre • Centre for Addiction and Mental Health • Credit Valley Hospital • Mississauga Parent Child Resource Centre • Infant and Child Development Services Peel • Peel Children's Centre • Peel Public Health • Punjabi Community Health Services • Success By 6 Peel • Vita Centre

Having another Baby after Postpartum Mood Disorder



One of the hardest aspects of having PMD for many women is the knowledge that in order to add to their family they have to face the prospect of becoming ill again. The fact is that if a woman had a previous episode of PMD she is at an increased risk of developing the illness with a subsequent baby. Therefore if she decides to have another baby she needs to accept that she may become ill and plan accordingly. Here are a few things to consider should she decide to have another baby:

- Just because it happened with the first doesn't mean it will happen again.
- This time she will be aware of the warning signs and be able to seek help early and recover faster.
- If she was taking medications last time she can take comfort in knowing this is an option.
- She can try to make this baby's arrival different from the first so she is not reminded of last time.
- If it helps her she can remove any items which concerned her last time for example; sharp objects.
- She can tell loved ones what worked and what didn't so they will know what to say and not to say.
- Make plans for support such as friends, loved ones, doctor, health visitor, and therapist.
- There is no sure way to prevent PMD however it makes sense to avoid big stressors (moving, job change).
- Looking after herself physically, for example; exercise and eating well.
- Ensure she discusses options and agrees upon a plan with her healthcare professionals.

References; *Having Another Baby After Depression* [fact sheet](#) & *What Am I Thinking? Having a Baby after Postpartum Depression* Karen Kleinman

Resources

Parents Voice on Adoption-Raising Children Birth to 6 Years

Parents who adopt may experience post adoption mood disorders. A new adoption support group meets monthly and offers support for this issue as well as many other challenges experienced by families who adopt. Meetings are held at the Ontario Early Years Centre located at #105-57 Mill Street North, Brampton.
To register call Noreen 905-452-1973 ext. 1047

[Are you taking care of yourself?](#) Quiz for mothers about their own self care by The Pacific Post Partum Support Society

Being There When Mental Illness Strikes Someone Near You; A [guide](#) for a friend, family member or co-worker

[Depression During Pregnancy Treatment Recommendations](#)

A Joint Report from the American Psychiatric Association & The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists

Obsessive Thoughts are Common in PMD *(continued from front)*

Obsessive Thoughts	Psychosis (a medical emergency)
Intrusive thoughts that cause distress for the woman	Aggressive thoughts without guilt or distress
Fears of acting on or thinking the thought	Hearing voices or seeing things that other people don't see
Avoidance or rituals example; avoids being alone with baby or repeatedly checks baby for breathing	Bizarre or violent behavior

Adapted from Wiegartz & Gyoerkoe, 2009. The Pregnancy and Postpartum Anxiety Workbook

Did you know?

Mom's Behaviour Key to Dad's involvement in Child Care

A study found that fathers were more involved in the day-to-day care of their infants when they received active encouragement from their partner. Encouragement is very important, and really makes a difference in how much fathers participate in the care of their infants. Read [article](#)

