

# WHAT HELPS WHAT HURTS

## When someone you love has perinatal depression

Support from family and friends is very important to a woman who is experiencing perinatal depression.

Women who have perinatal depression often feel sad, hopeless, worthless and full of doubts. You probably want to say something to your loved one to help them feel better. But what can you say? Will it help or will your well-meant comment do more harm than good?

Here is a list to help you talk with someone who has symptoms of perinatal depression. Put the statements into your own words. What's important is that the woman knows you are being supportive. You didn't cause your loved one's illness and you can't make her feel better. You can only do your best to offer support.

WHAT HELPS	WHAT HURTS
Perinatal depression is common and it is what is causing you to have these thoughts and feelings.	We all feel down sometimes. It will work out.
I haven't been through this, but I know it is real and I want to help you.	How can you feel this way? This should be the happiest time of your life.
You are important to me. I want to see you get better.	You're probably just tired. Take a nap and you'll feel better when you wake up.
Tell me what I can do to help you.	Don't tell anyone else or they might think you are a bad mother.
You are not alone in this. I am here to help you.	It's just the baby blues; it will go away on its own.
Talk to me. I'm listening.	You will probably start feeling better after you've lost some of the weight you gained.
It's not your fault. You are not weak. You are not a failure. You can get better.	Don't take medication. You can do this on your own.
Take some time for yourself right now. I will take care of the baby.	You're a strong woman. You don't need help to get it together. Just snap out of it.

*If your loved one is talking about harming herself or her baby, don't try to handle the situation on your own. Contact a health professional immediately or take her to the nearest emergency room.*