Many parents experience unexpected changes to their mental health during the perinatal period.

Looking after yourself is just as important as looking after your baby.
Having a baby is life changing.
It’s normal to find pregnancy and early parenting challenging.

We know that stress, interrupted sleep and 24-hour parenting can take their toll. Looking after yourself might seem harder after you have a baby, but life can feel more manageable when we care for ourselves too.

There are some simple things you can do to nurture yourself:

1. **Get outside for 15 minutes.** Sitting in the sun, taking your baby for a quick walk or doing some deep breathing outside can help reset your mood.

2. **Prioritise sleep.** Sleep can have a major impact on your mood and ability to cope. It can be difficult to get enough sleep when you have a baby, but making an effort to go to bed earlier, having a warm bath or shower, and avoiding screen time before bed can help.

3. **Take time out.** Try scheduling some time each week to do something on your own or with a partner or friend. You might like to watch a movie, spend time on a hobby or just rest.

The PANDA Helpline provides a safe and confidential space for any expecting or new parent needing support. Counsellors on our National Helpline can support you to talk openly and honestly about your thoughts, feelings and experiences.

PANDA also provides a free, anonymous mental health checklist on our website, which can help you to see if what you’re experiencing (or observing in a loved one) could be reason to seek help.

Reaching out is the first step

**PANDA National Helpline** 1300 726 306

**Visit panda.org.au for more information.**