

If you suffer from postpartum anxiety (PPA) after giving birth, you might worry a lot, feel like your mind is racing and think something bad is going to happen. If this happens, it's important to get professional help. But in the meantime, you can practice mindfulness to help yourself feel better.

Mindfulness is a type of meditation where you focus on being intensely aware of what you're sensing and feeling in the moment. By doing this, you can direct your mind away from all the negative thoughts causing stress and anxiety—to a place of greater calm and balance.

Simple mindfulness exercises



Pay attention

It's hard to slow down and notice things in a busy world. But try using your senses to tap into everything around you. Watch your baby's face make tiny movements, hear a dog barking in the distance, taste the food on your tongue, breathe in the delicious smells as you eat.



Live in the moment

Bring an open, accepting attention to everything you do. Find joy in simple pleasures, even if it's enjoying a cup of tea while your baby sleeps.



Focus on your breathing

If you're overcome by negative thoughts, sit down, take a deep breath and close your eyes. Focus on your breath as it moves in and out of your body. Sitting and breathing even for a minute can help.

Structured mindfulness exercises



Body scan meditation

Lie on your back with your legs straight out and arms at your sides, palms facing up. Focus your attention slowly and deliberately on each part of your body, from head to toe or toe to head. Be aware of any sensations, emotions or thoughts as you scan each part of your body, one section at a time.



Sitting meditation

Sit in a cozy chair with your back straight, feet flat on the floor and hands in your lap. Breathing through your nose, focus on your breath moving in and out of your body. If any noise or thought interrupts you, take note of what it was, then return the focus to your breath.



Walking meditation

Find a quiet place ten to twenty feet in length, and begin to walk slowly. Focus on the experience of walking, being aware of how you stand, balance and move your feet. When you reach the end of the path, turn around and walk back while still staying aware of every sensation.



Practice your mindfulness exercises every day. Over time, they will flow naturally into your everyday routine. Think of them as a way for you to care for yourself and your mental health.