

Helen's story

I had my first child in December 1999 - it was a very stressful and long labour resulting in an emergency c-section as my son was in distress. All ended well but I was very scared to have another child. Eventually I got up the courage as I approached 40!

Having had a miscarriage in March 2004, I discovered I was pregnant again in January 2005 I was very nervous of a repeat. Thankfully all went well and I was very well and excited until 25 weeks. Suddenly I woke up one night breathing fast, sweating and feeling as if I was choking. I had a couple of other 'attacks' over a few nights - it escalated until I was scared to sleep.

I would lay awake worrying, I was sure I was going to die and baby too. I tried to explain my fears to others - but got the stock 'you should be excited' statements and little understanding. I got more and more tired and very low, terrified of the long nights, anxious and stressed. I didn't want to see people but forced myself to carry on for the sake of normality and my 5 year old son. I looked on the Internet and found The Depression in Pregnancy web site, read it and felt reassured I was not alone, it gave lots of positive information.

I exchanged a number of emails with Delphi (founder of www.depression-in-pregnancy.org.uk) and was very reassured to learn that I had no higher probability of pnd than any other new mothers - this was great news as I was very worried my fears would continue after the birth too. Delphi also arranged for a Support Advisor from the local Hospital to contact me, She came round to my home to discuss my fears and took me around the hospital - we especially visited the Operating Theatre where c-sections are performed - this particularly helped to address my concerns.

My doctor prescribed anti-depressants - I did not want to take these as the side effect leaflet scared me and arranged at my own expense (as my doctor had a 4 month waiting list) to see a counsellor - an ex mid wife, she helped me to express my fears and talking really helped me. After the birth (another emergency c-section!) I was elated. My daughter is now 15 weeks old. I am very happy and the stresses have all melted away. I remain very thankful to www.depression-in-pregnancy.org.uk for giving me hope and an explanation for my fears and supporting me so well where no other support was available.

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