

## Women Mental Health

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/a-z-topics/women-and-mental-health>

Social and economic factors can put women at greater risk of poor mental health than men. However, women generally find it easier to talk about their feelings and have stronger social networks, both of which can help protect their mental health.

This information is relevant to all women, though trans women may also find useful resources from organisations such as Mermaids and Gendered Intelligence.

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### What Affects Women's Mental Health?

Around **one in five women** has a common mental health problem, such as depression or anxiety. While there can be many reasons why these develop, some risk factors particularly affect women. Women are more likely than men:

- to be carers, which can lead to stress, anxiety and isolation.
- to live in poverty, which—combined with concerns about personal safety and working mainly in the home—can lead to social isolation.
- to experience **physical and sexual abuse**, which can have a long-term impact on their mental health.
- to experience **sexual violence**, which can lead to **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**.

When women find it hard to talk about difficult feelings, they tend to **internalise** them. This can lead to conditions like depression, eating disorders and self-harm. In contrast, men are more likely to express distress through disruptive or anti-social behaviour.

On the positive side, some factors protect women's mental health:

- Women tend to have **stronger social networks**.
- They often find it easier to **confide in friends**.
- They are more likely to **receive treatment** for mental health issues.

## **Women's Health Issues**

### **Perinatal Depression**

Having a baby is a major life event that can trigger mental health problems such as:

- **Antenatal depression** (during pregnancy)
- **Postnatal depression** (after giving birth)

Together, these are referred to as **perinatal depression**.

This is not a sign of weakness or bad parenting. Support is available and may include:

- Talking therapies
- Medication
- Specialist perinatal mental health services

Support is also available through organisations such as **PANDAS**.

### **Menopause**

Every woman's experience of menopause is different. However, many report:

- Mood swings
- Anxiety
- Low mood

Treatments may include:

- **Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT)**
- **Talking therapies**

It is recommended to speak to a GP to explore the best options for individual needs.