

How Black parents-to-be can support their mental health during pregnancy

Pregnancy is an exciting journey—but it can also bring about challenges. For Black parents-to-be, these stressors can be heightened by social and racial inequalities, in addition to judgment from society. While steps are being taken every day to break down barriers, it's important for Black pregnant people and their partners to prioritize their mental well-being throughout the pregnancy journey. Read on for strategies to support your mental health during pregnancy from Maven Mental Health Specialist Qu'Nesha Sawyer.



01 Educate yourself

Black parents-to-be face unique mental health challenges during pregnancy including:

Support that lacks attention and compassion: “It can be helpful to take the time to vet potential institutions and providers, wherever you get your prenatal support or where you plan to deliver,” says Sawyer.

02 Find culturally humble support

What is culturally humble support? It means that the support you get meets you where you are and your provider works to understand your specific needs.

“I encourage people to interview at least three different mental health providers before deciding to work with someone,” explains Sawyer.

03 Practice self-care

Self-care might sound like a buzzword—but it's an important part of staying healthy. **“I love incorporating micro-moments of self-care!** This means doing things to meet our essential needs,” says Sawyer. **We underestimate how much pregnancy takes out of us. And especially for Black parents-to-be navigating this time, self-care is essential.**

04 Set boundaries

It might be hard—but **learn how to say no.** Here are some ways you can verbalize your boundaries:

- “I’d rather you didn’t touch my belly. Do you want to talk to the baby instead?”
- “Thank you for giving that advice, but I can talk to my providers about it.”
- “That’s a little personal for me to answer, but thank you for caring to ask.”