



INFO SHEET

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What is Birth Trauma?

Birth trauma has become the commonly used term to describe the emotional and psychological distress that can be experienced by parents following childbirth. It typically describes situations when the experience of giving birth was overwhelming, frightening, or unexpected, and the woman felt powerless and lacked control.

A woman might consider her birth to have been traumatic in the event of birth complications which necessitated medical intervention. This might include an emergency cesarean section, forceps delivery, postpartum hemorrhage or more. Birth injuries can also be very painful and distressing, for mother and baby.

Symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) include flashbacks, nightmares, avoiding reminders of the birth, such as difficulty returning to the hospital. Women may also struggle with anxiety, depression, guilt or shame. Sometimes women can also experience difficulty connecting with their newborn.

Women who have experienced traumatic birth are at higher risk of postnatal depression, and it is important to seek the help of a qualified mental health professional.

How can the Centre for Clinical Psychology help with Birth Trauma?

The Centre for Clinical Psychology provides a safe and supportive environment for parents to work through their distress following a difficult birth. The Centre for Clinical Psychology's clinicians are experienced in treating postpartum mental health issues, as well as working with clients who have experienced trauma/PTSD.

Psychologists at the Centre for Clinical Psychology are trained in Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT) for trauma and PTSD, an effective and well researched treatment.

Psychologists at the Centre for Clinical Psychology can also support parents to develop a close connection to their newborn, as well as navigate the challenges of life with a new baby.

If you or someone you know is struggling with birth trauma, the Centre for Clinical Psychology can help. To book an appointment, call the clinic on 03 9077 0122 or visit our website at <https://ccp.net.au/booking/> to book online.

The Centre's team of experienced therapists understands all parents are doing their best.