



ANXIETY

DURING PREGNANCY & THE POSTPARTUM



LET'S TALK ABOUT IT!

WHY DO WE EXPERIENCE ANXIETY?

People experience anxiety and fear when in danger or under threat

Anxiety and fear are natural, healthy responses to threat!



DO WE NEED ANXIETY AND FEAR?

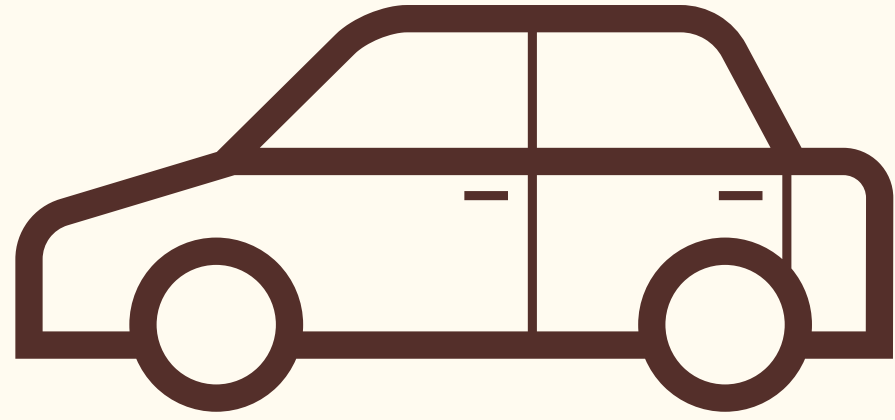
YES! Anxiety and fear are **REALLY IMPORTANT** to our survival



They . . .

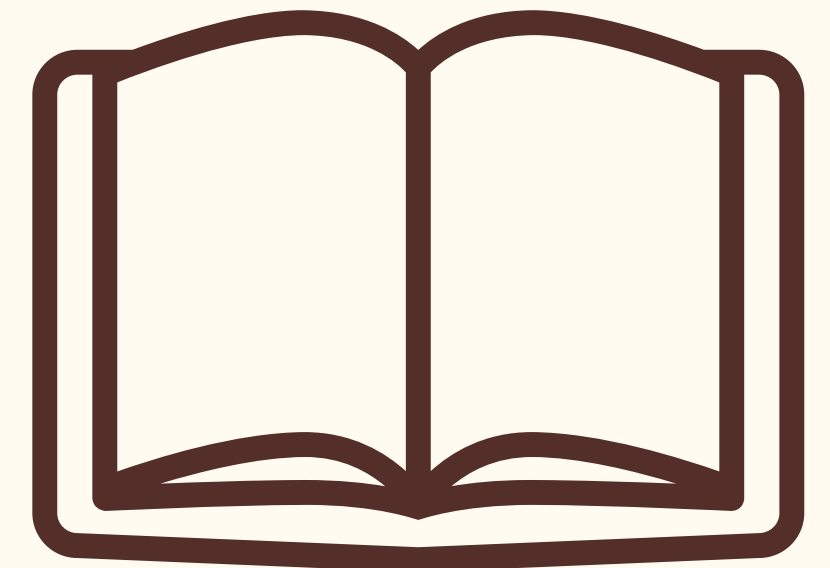
- protect us**
- keep us safe**
- motivate us to avoid harm**

ANXIETY HELPS US . . .



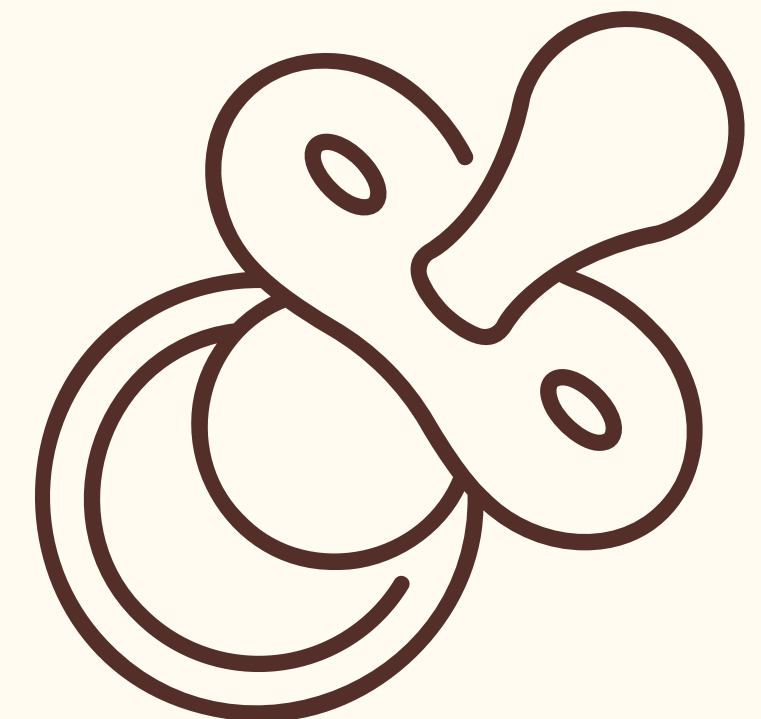
**Jump out of the way
of speeding cars**

**Study for
upcoming exams**



**Take care of our health
during pregnancy**

**Keep our babies
safe from harm**



Who experiences anxiety?



EVERYONE!

Is anxiety always helpful?



NOPE!

ANXIETY MAY BE UNHELPFUL IF . . .



**We feel very anxious
or afraid of something
that is **NOT AT ALL**
dangerous**

e.g., a kitten



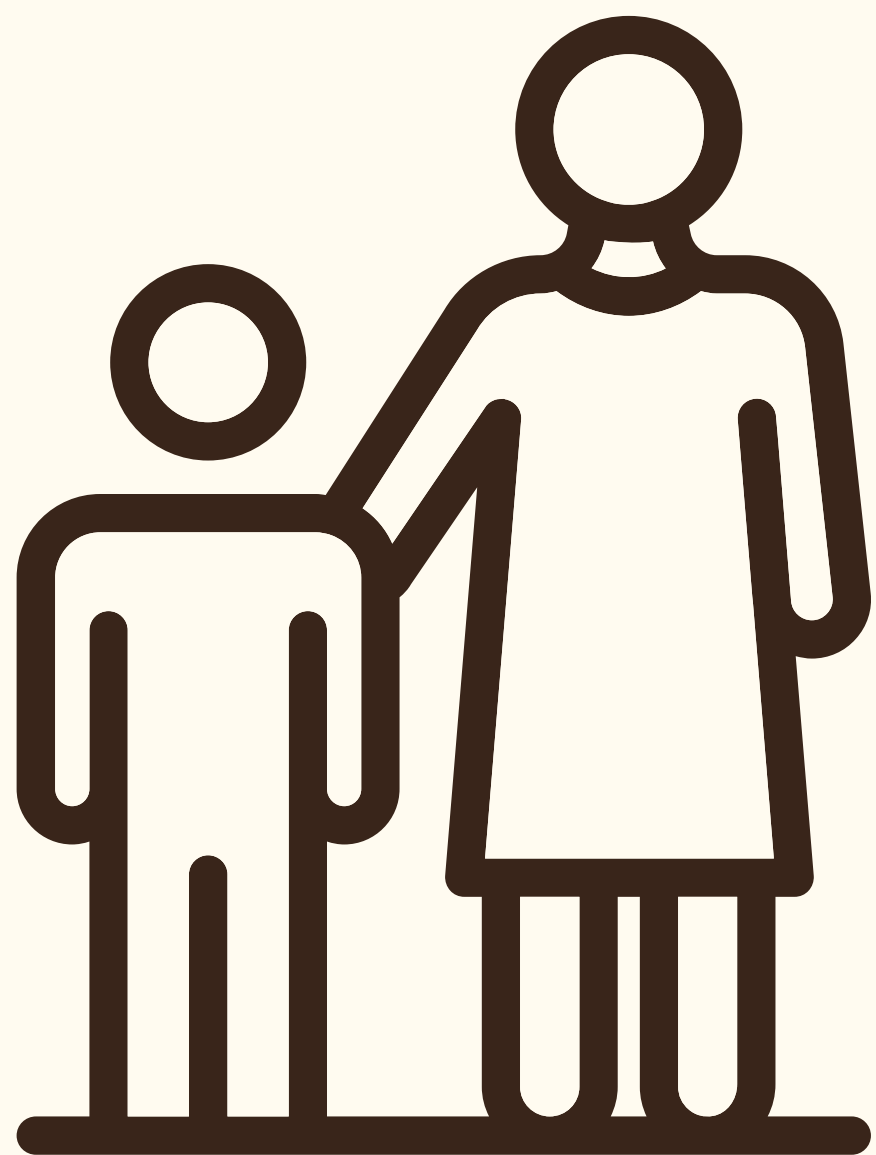
We feel **MUCH MORE
anxious or afraid of
something than we
should**

**e.g., terrified of
leaving your house**

WHEN DOES ANXIETY BECOME A PROBLEM?

Your anxiety makes it hard for you to live your life

Your anxiety causes a lot of distress



You have difficulty parenting



Your relationships suffer



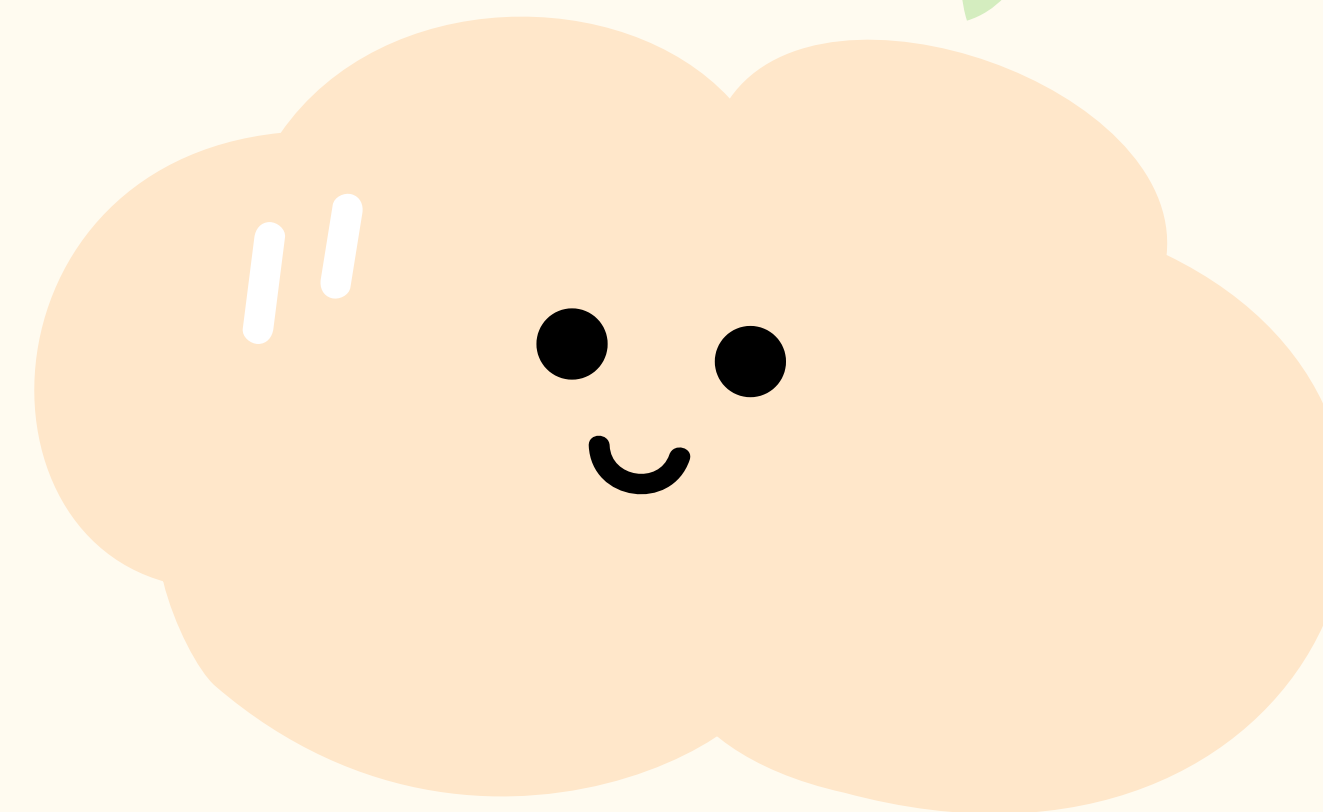
You don't function well at work

WHAT ABOUT ANXIETY DURING PREGNANCY OR IN THE POSTPARTUM?

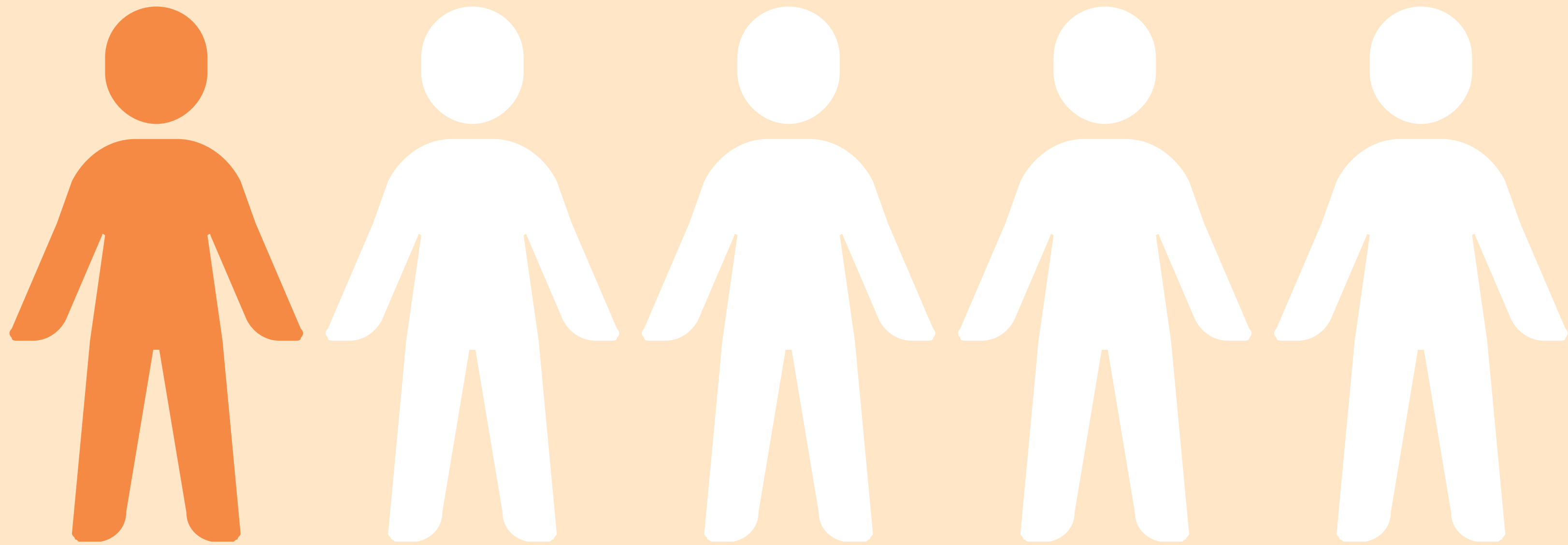
Is it just me who is anxious during this time?



Nope! It's definitely NOT just you!



It's actually **REALLY** common . . .



1 in 5

people are affected by at least one anxiety or anxiety-related disorder during their pregnancy or the postpartum

The risk is more than

5 times higher

if you are experiencing a high-risk pregnancy

WHAT ARE PREGNANT/POSTPARTUM WOMEN & PEOPLE ANXIOUS ABOUT?

Childbirth

Being a good parent

Not feeling supported during labour

Sleep!
(not enough of it)

Pregnancy going wrong

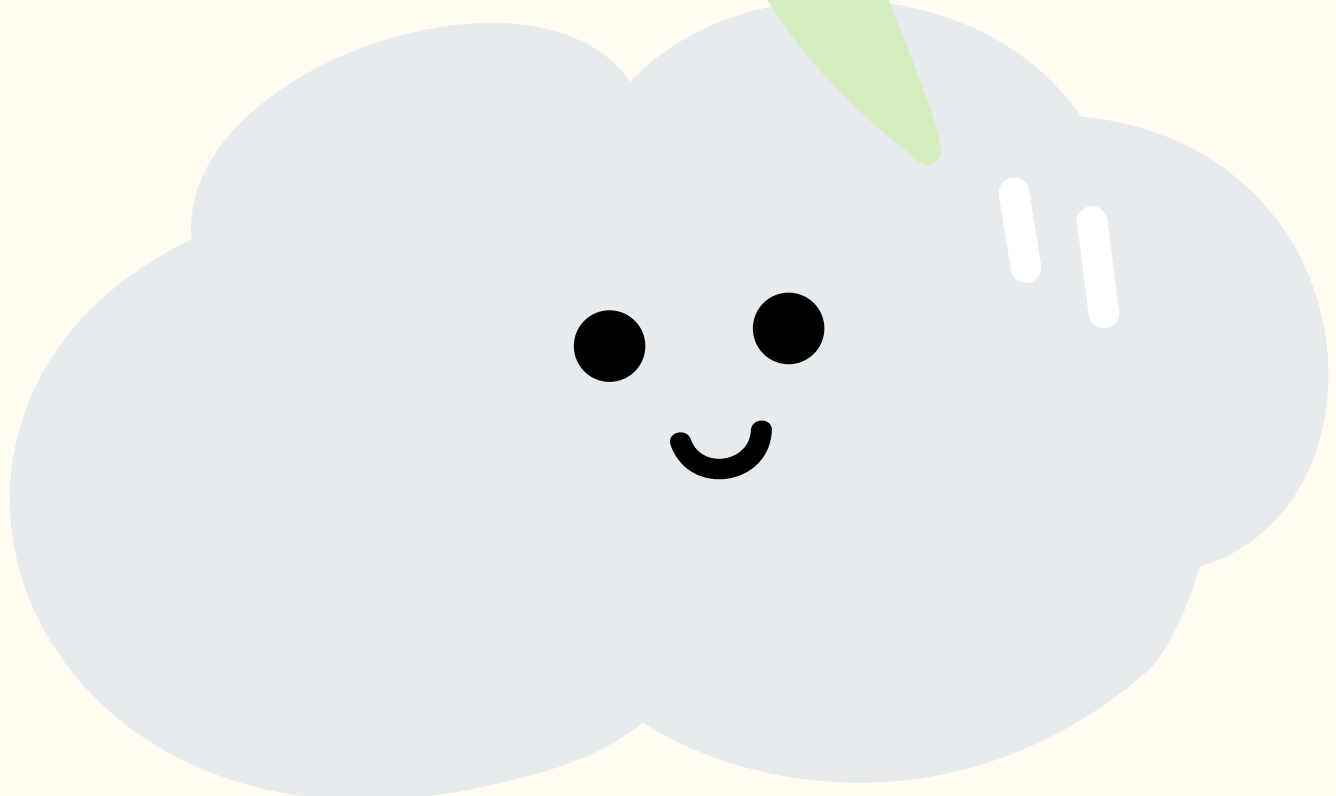
Being overwhelmed

Pregnancy loss

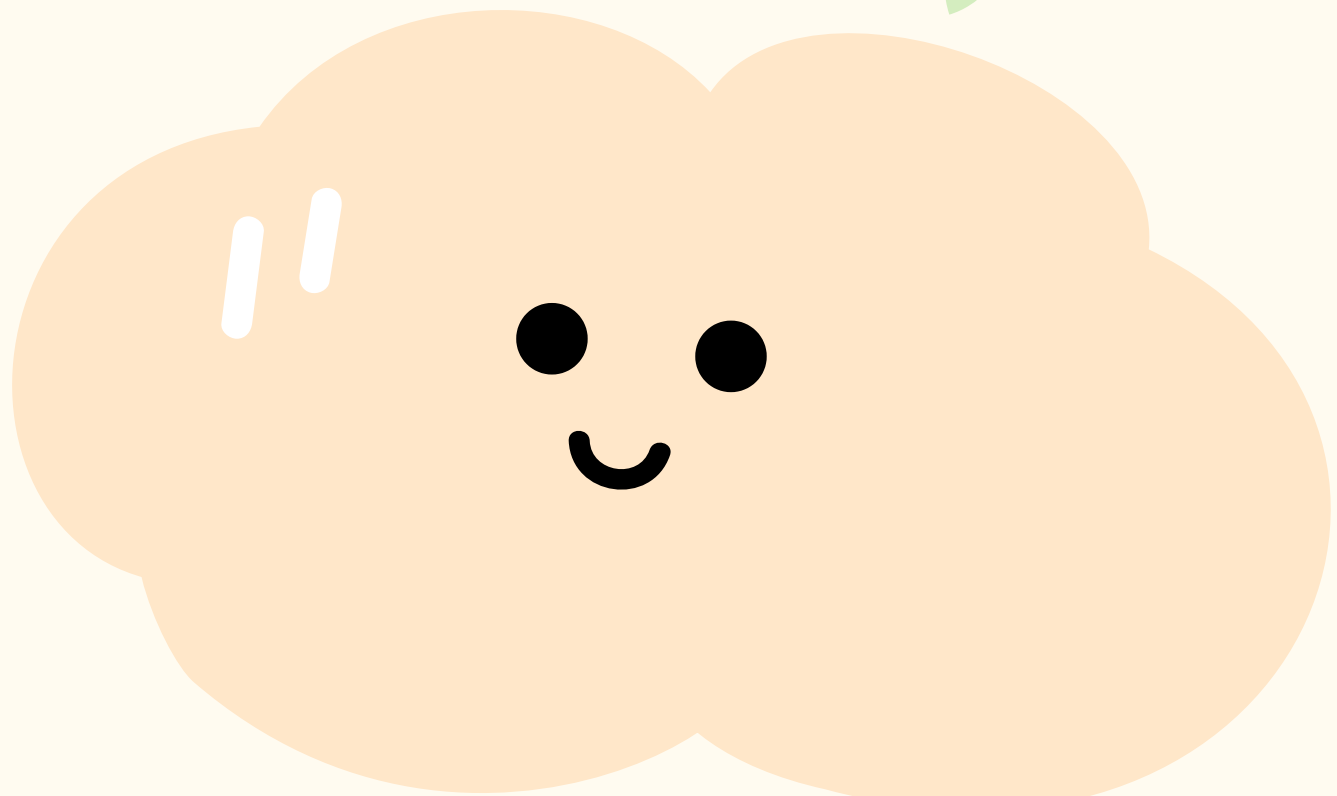
Bad things happening to the baby

Not having enough money

WHAT CAN I DO?



**It's okay to ask
for help!**



**Remember...
you are not
alone.**

**TALK TO YOUR HEALTHCARE PROVIDER
IF YOU THINK ANXIETY HAS BECOME
A PROBLEM FOR YOU**

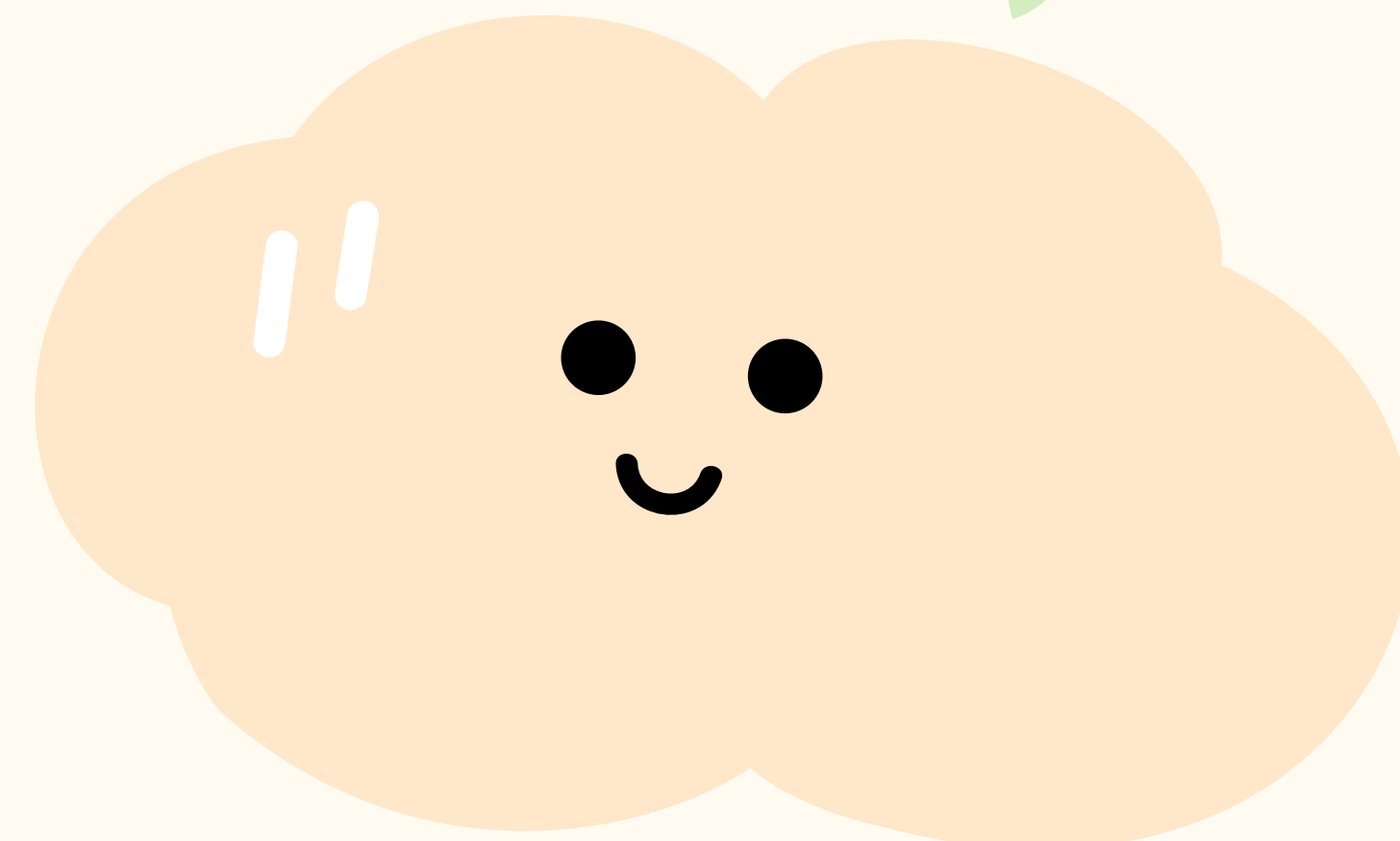
THE MOST EFFECTIVE TREATMENTS FOR ANXIETY ARE . . .

TALK THERAPY & MEDICATION

I like talk therapy!



Medication works really well for me!



TALK THERAPY

If your anxiety is mild



you might benefit from self-help materials (books, web sites, etc.)

If your anxiety is more severe

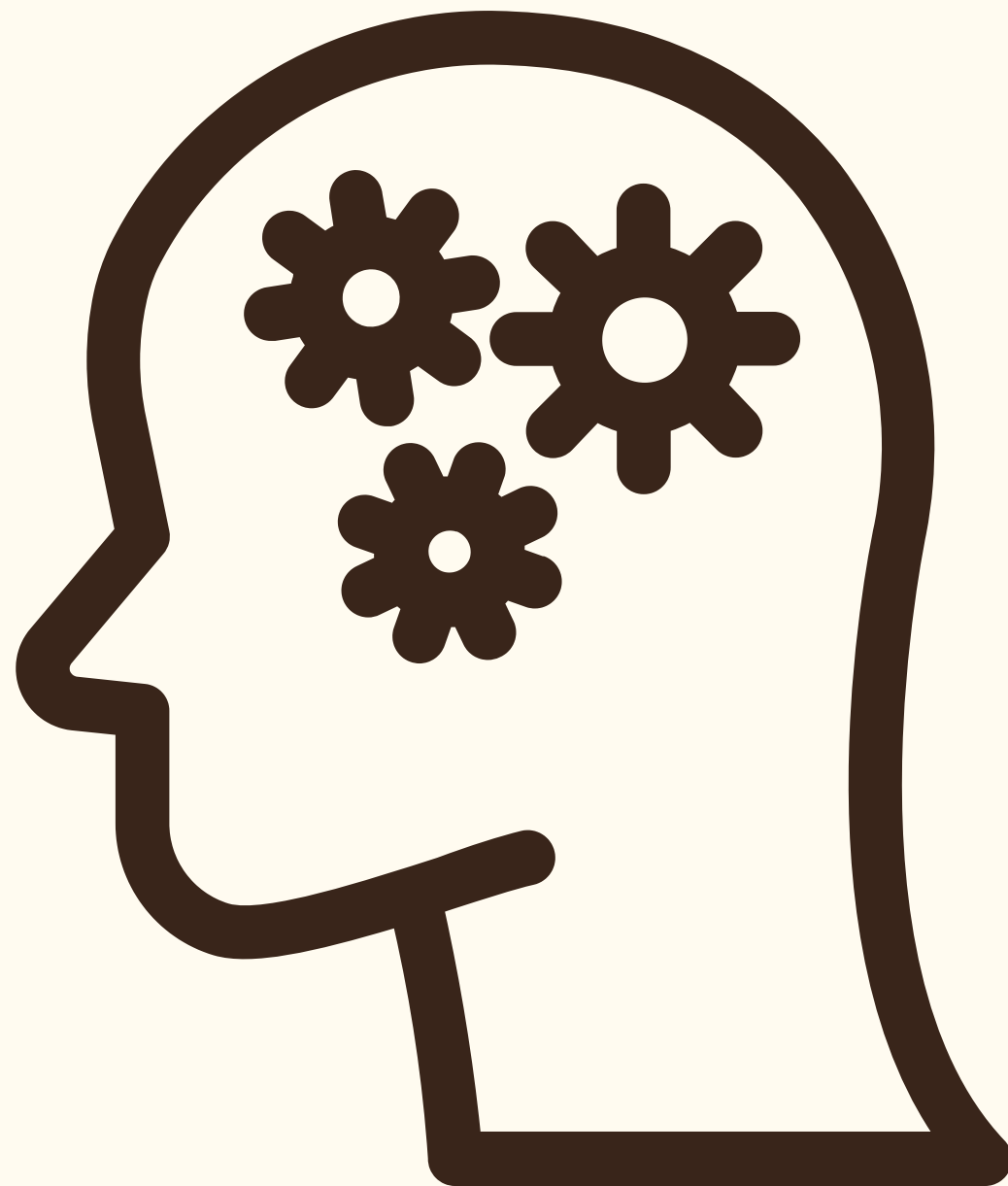


you may benefit from individual therapy

LOOK FOR OUR RESOURCES LIST AT THE END

COGNITIVE BEHAVIOUR THERAPY (CBT)

CBT is a type of talk therapy



Preferred by many perinatal people



Works by changing thinking and behavioural patterns



The treatment of choice for many anxiety problems

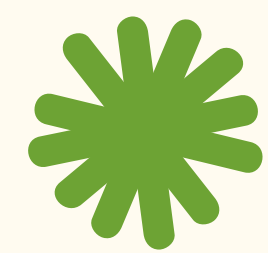


The talk therapy with the most scientific support

Other evidence-based therapies used to treat anxiety include (but are not limited to) . . .



Mindfulness based therapy



**Acceptance and commitment
therapy (ACT)**



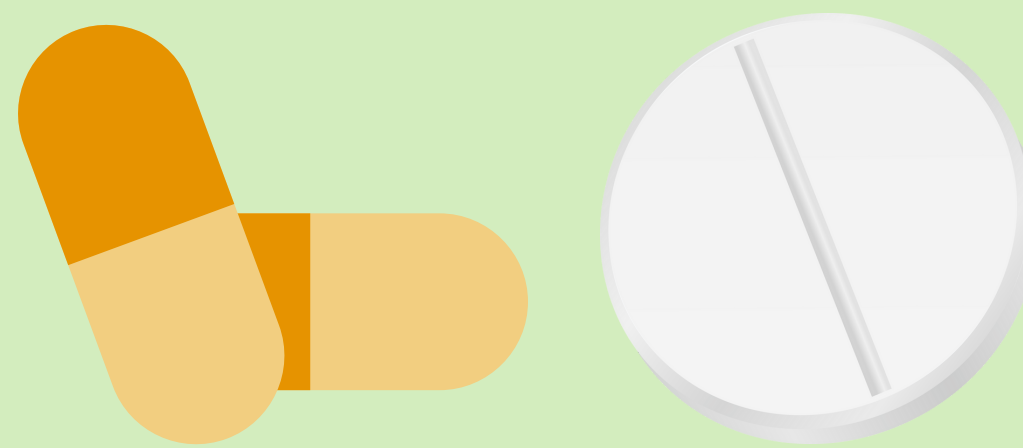
**In some cases, more
specialized forms of CBT may
also be helpful**



MEDICATION

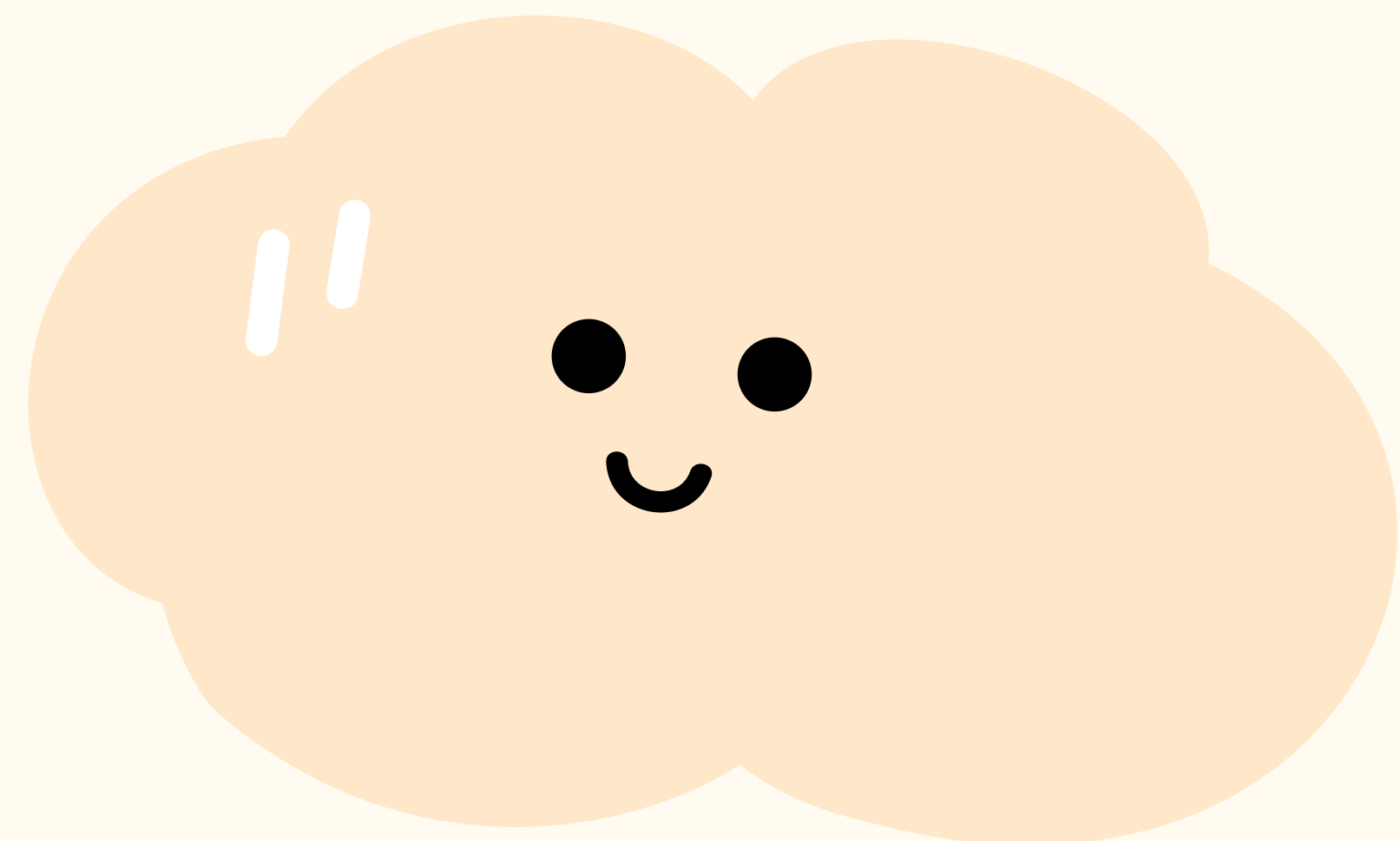
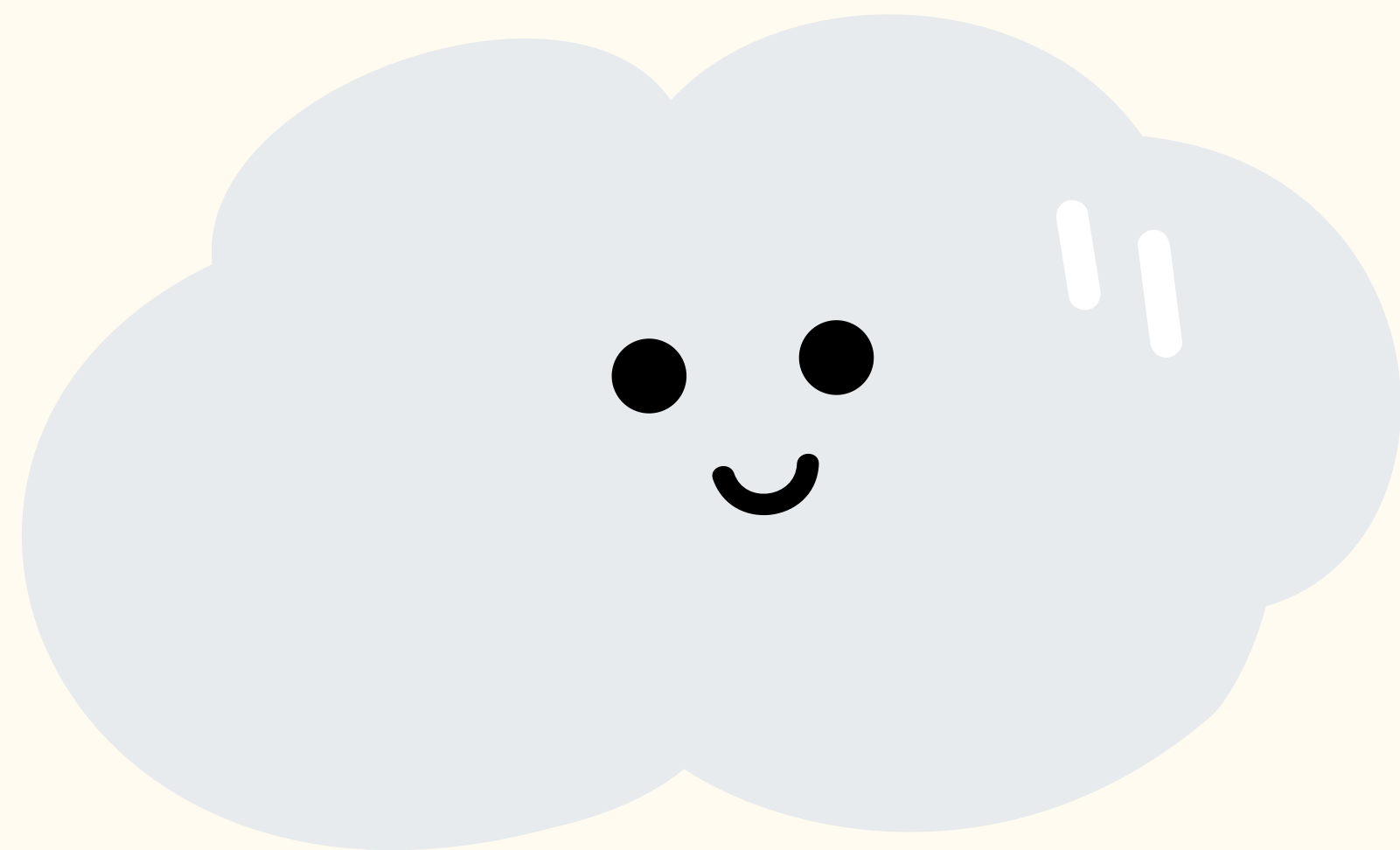
Medication is also an effective treatment for anxiety

Antidepressants (e.g., SSRIs, SNRIs) are the most common medications used to treat anxiety



Others may include antipsychotics and benzodiazepines

**SPEAK WITH YOUR
HEALTHCARE PROVIDER
ABOUT THE BEST
TREATMENT OPTION
FOR YOU!**



WHERE CAN I FIND HELP ?

PERINATAL MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES



Perinatal Services BC

Education/BC

perinatalservicesbc.ca

Postpartum Support International

Education/Counselling/CBT

postpartum.net

Maternal Mental Health Now

Education

maternalmentalhealthnow.org

PAR Lab Website (us!)

Education

parlab.med.ubc.ca/resources

BC Reproductive Mental Health Program

Education/Counselling/CBT/BC

reproductivementalhealth.ca/anxiety

Pacific Postpartum Support Society

Education/Counselling/BC

postpartum.org
604-255-7000 / 1-855-255-7999

WHERE CAN I FIND HELP ?

GENERAL MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELLING RESOURCES



Anxiety Canada

Education/Counselling/CBT/Canada
anxietycanada.com

Here to Help BC

Counselling/CBT/BC/Canada
heretohelp.bc.ca

BC Mental Health Support Line

Counselling/BC
phone only: 310-6789

Mood Disorders Association of BC

Counselling/CBT/BC
mdabc.net

BC Psychological Association

Counselling/CBT/BC
<https://referral.psychologists.bc.ca/>

Canadian Association of Cognitive and Behavioural Therapies

Counselling/CBT
<https://cacbt.ca/en/certification/find-a-certified-therapist/>

WHERE CAN I FIND HELP ?

ONLINE SELF-HELP MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES



Kelty's Key Online Therapy

Online/Counselling/CBT

keltyskey.com

Mindshift CBT

Apple or Google App/Counselling/CBT

Available for download through Apple and Google

Better Help

Online/Counselling

www.betterhelp.com/get-started/?help_with=Anxiety

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE DISORDER



Information on Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder *Education/Resources*

Obsessive-compulsive disorder or OCD is a type of anxiety disorder

OCD is common during pregnancy and the postpartum, and can include scary intrusive thoughts about one's baby

This topic is covered in a separate infographic which you can find here:

<https://med-fom-motherinfantwellness.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2023/05/Infographic-April-2023.pdf>

MEET THE TEAM



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Special thanks to our team members for their contribution to this work!