

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.

The reality of maternal and infant health

outcomes for Black birthing parents: While it's scary to learn about bad health outcomes, knowledge is power and can make you a better advocate for yourself as you go through pregnancy and birth.

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. At Maven, members can find providers of the same background, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation.

03 Practice self-care

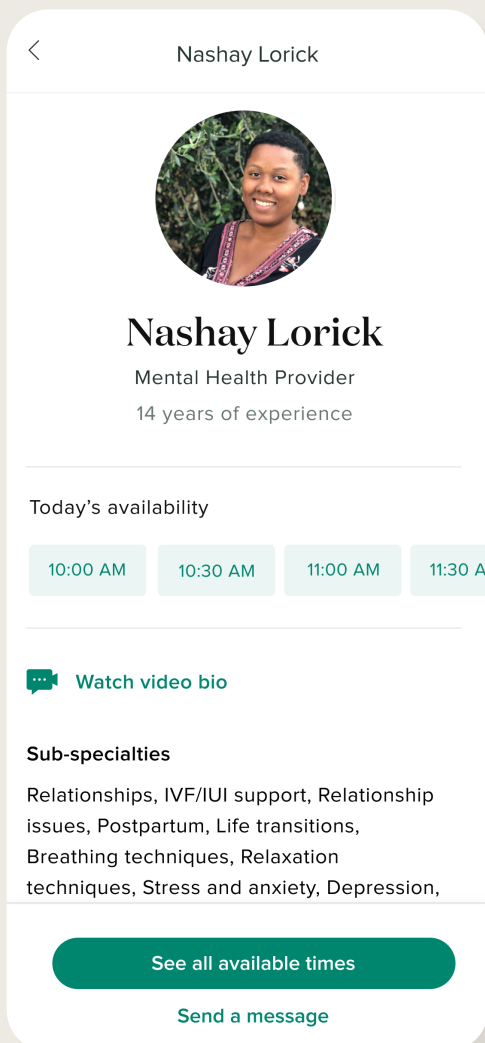
Self-care might sound like a buzzword—but it's an important part of staying healthy. **“I love incorporating micro-moments of self-care!** This means doing things to meet our essential needs,” says Sawyer. **We underestimate how much pregnancy takes out of us. And especially for Black parents-to-be navigating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

How Maven can help and support your mental health

“Maven does a great job of providing culturally-responsive mental health support to our Black members.

We also try our best to match our Black parents-to-be who express a desire to work with a Black mental health provider. We're also able to provide ongoing support to many of our members so that there is a continuity of support throughout the duration of the pregnancy and even beyond!

Maven Mental Health Specialist Qu'Nesha Sawyer



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.”



Join Maven today for a culturally-humble team that can be there for your family through every up and down of your pregnancy and postpartum period.

Sign up to access Maven for free at mavenclinic.com/join/black-parental-mentalhealth.

Find the support that’s right for you with Maven

- Prepare for labor and create your birth plan
- Learn stress relief tools from Mental Health Professionals
- Navigate feeding your baby
- Empower yourself with education and support