Birth Trauma

BIRTH TRAUMA IS WHEN NEGATIVE BIRTH EXPERIENCES MAY (AND OFTEN DO) LEAD TO POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER AFTER CHILDBIRTH. BIRTH TRAUMA IS IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

The four most successful strategies in reducing negative birth experiences and thus birth trauma are ...

- supporting childbearing women.
- relaxation and pain relief (including touch, massage and self-selected music), during labour and birth.
- early labour assessment to optimise the physiological
 process and progress of labour and birth i.e., minimize obstetric interventions childbirth preparedness.





Symptoms of birth trauma (postnatal PTSD)

There are four main symptoms

- Re-experiencing the traumatic event through flashbacks,
 nightmares or intrusive memories. These make you feel distressed and panicky
- Avoiding anything that reminds you of the trauma. This can mean refusing to walk past the hospital where you gave birth or avoiding meeting other women with new babies
- Feeling hypervigilant: this means that you are constantly alert, irritable and jumpy. You worry that something terrible is going to happen to your baby
- Feeling low and unhappy. You may feel guilty and blame
 yourself for your traumatic birth. You may have difficulty
 remembering parts of your birth experience.

Who gets birth trauma?

- Some women (and their birth partner) experience events during childbirth (as well as in pregnancy or immediately after birth) that would traumatise any normal person.
- For other women, it is not always the sensational or dramatic events that trigger childbirth trauma but other factors such as feelings of loss of control, loss of dignity, the hostile attitudes of the people around them, feelings of not being heard or the absence of informed consent to medical procedures.



Birth Trauma Tree















