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PSVa Mission

Help new and expectant mothers and their families overcome anxiety, depression, and other perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs).

PSVa Vision

Every childbearing woman in Virginia will receive information about perinatal mood and anxiety disorders (PMADs) and have access to help.

**Hope & Help Hero:
 Dr. Ugochi Akoma**



DAY 1.

What to Expect...When You Arrive Home

The first 2-3 weeks are an intense period of transition: baby transitioning to the outside world, and mom transitioning to motherhood. Allow time to adjust to this new life.

Parenting can be joyful, but the first few weeks can be a great deal of work. Life for newborn baby consists of eating, digesting, sleeping, and crying, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. New parents often find themselves exhausted and overwhelmed, asking "How did this little baby change our lives so much?"

This intense period of hands-on parenting can cause even the most competent and confident parents to question their parenting skills. Adults who once were able to keep the house spotless, juggle competing priorities, and stay ahead of chores can find themselves drowning in dirty dishes, dirty laundry, and a dirty house. This is completely normal.



Expectation



Reality

Dr. Akoma is one of the fabulous doctors at Virginia Hospital Center's Maternal-Fetal Medicine Practice, where she treats high-risk pregnancies. Dr. Akoma -- herself a new mother -- tells it like it is: that the first few weeks can be tough, that breastfeeding is important but not at the sake of a new mom's mental or physical health, that 4-5 hours of **uninterrupted** sleep is essential for a new mom's well-being.

It's not a surprise to learn that Dr. Akoma was named one of Northern Virginia Magazine's 2016 list of BEST DOCTORS.

Thank you, Dr. Akoma, for all you do to help new moms!



Join PSVa as we celebrate the 10th annual LUNAFEST in Arlington. LUNAFEST is a fabulous traveling film festival of short films by....for...about women. These year's program of six films -- ranging from animation to fictional drama -- address women's health, motherhood, body image, aging, and cultural diversity.

And some awesome raffle prizes will add to the festivities, including....
Dinner at Cafe Milano
Kennedy Center Tickets
Winery tours

What To Expect....BABY

Transition. Baby needs help transitioning from the warm, cozy space inside the womb to the outside world. Think of the first two weeks as enabling this transition. Hold and feed baby as much as possible and as much as baby wants. It is not possible to spoil baby at this stage: baby **needs** love and warmth and food.

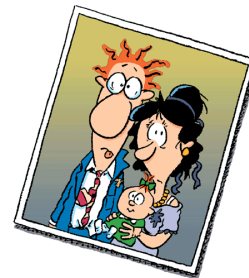
Feeding. Feeding baby is a major activity for the first few weeks. It is important that baby receives nutrition, whether from breast or bottle, whenever baby wants. Remember that baby ate whenever s/he wanted when in utero. So instead of being surprised that baby is hungry AGAIN -- even if it is only an hour since last feeding -- celebrate that baby is going for more than 15 minutes between feedings.

Sleep. Newborns typically sleep a LOT, but not necessarily for long stretches of time. And baby may often want to sleep on or near you, finding comfort in your warmth, smell, and touch. It's OK; you will not be spoiling baby but instead be providing exactly what baby needs.

Personality. Baby is a unique individual, born with a unique temperament. It may take a few days -- or even a few weeks -- to understand baby's different noises and cries. Babies don't arrive with an owner's manual, nor do they tell time.



Expectation



Reality

What To Expect....New Mom

Transition. Mothers also need time to transition. Pregnancy, labor, and delivery are physically and emotionally demanding. Be kind to yourself. Allow yourself to heal and recover. No matter how baby was born, it was physically traumatic for your body. Some women bounce right back, but others need more time to recover and adjust.

Wednesday, March 2

6:30 Doors Open

7:30 Showtime

**Arlington Cinema 'n
Drafthouse,**

2903 Columbia Pike
Arlington 22204

TICKETS

\$20 in advance

\$25 at the door



PSVa is 'trending' on Facebook with daily posts addressing specific topics:

Monday will include support groups for the week and other PSVa resources

Tuesday and **Friday** will include the latest news from the world of PMADs

Wednesday will feature Wonderful Women providing hope and help to new moms

Thursday will give a shout-out to people and organizations we appreciate

**BECOME A PSVa
FACEBOOK FAN**

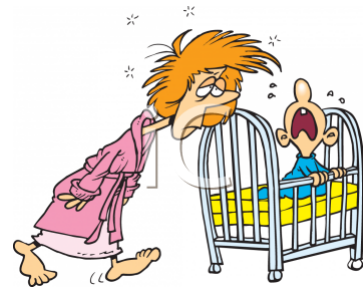
Feeding. New mothers should eat every time baby eats. Fill a basket with nutritious snacks (granola bars, nuts, etc) and water bottles and keep it wherever you feed baby. Then refuel every time baby eats. Strive to drink 64 ounces of water every day -- especially important if breastfeeding. Remember, you are now keeping 2 people alive.

Sleep. The most important thing a new mother can do for herself and her baby is to get a 4-5 hour stretch of uninterrupted sleep every night. Someone else should be responsible for caring for baby -- including feeding baby -- during this time. Sleep is necessary for your body to recover and your brain to rejuvenate; connections between brain cells become increasingly erratic the longer you are awake, affecting memory, executive functioning, and attention.

Personality. Most new mothers (70-80%) will experience mood swings, tearfulness, lack of concentration, irritability and anxiety during the first few weeks. These feelings are caused by a major lifestyle change and by changes in hormones levels. Sometimes called the Baby Blues, this is the normal adjustment period and these symptoms usually disappear in 2-3 weeks. It's OK to have mixed emotions during this period of transition.



Expectation



Reality

Hope and help for new mothers



www.postpartumva.org

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