

Anxiety in Pregnancy

Reducing Stress Through Continuity of Care



**Guided By You
Midwifery**

Agenda

**Health
Impact
Analysis**

**Reducing
Maternal
Stress**

**Understanding
Antenatal
Anxiety**

**The
Continuity
Concept**

**Clinical
Practice
Insights**

Defining Pregnancy Related Anxiety

A frequent antenatal challenge

Pregnancy related anxiety affects up to 1 in 5 expectant parents. It involves excessive worry about baby's health, the birth process and the transition to parenthood. Driven by hormonal shifts and life changes, recognising these feelings early is the first step to finding gentle, professional support



Identifying Triggers and Symptoms

Excessive Worry

Persistent uncontrollable thoughts about the baby's health or potential birth complications

Physical Tension

Experiencing restlessness, a racing heart, or muscle tightness throughout the day

Sleep Disruption

Difficulty falling or staying asleep due to stress and a mind that won't stop racing

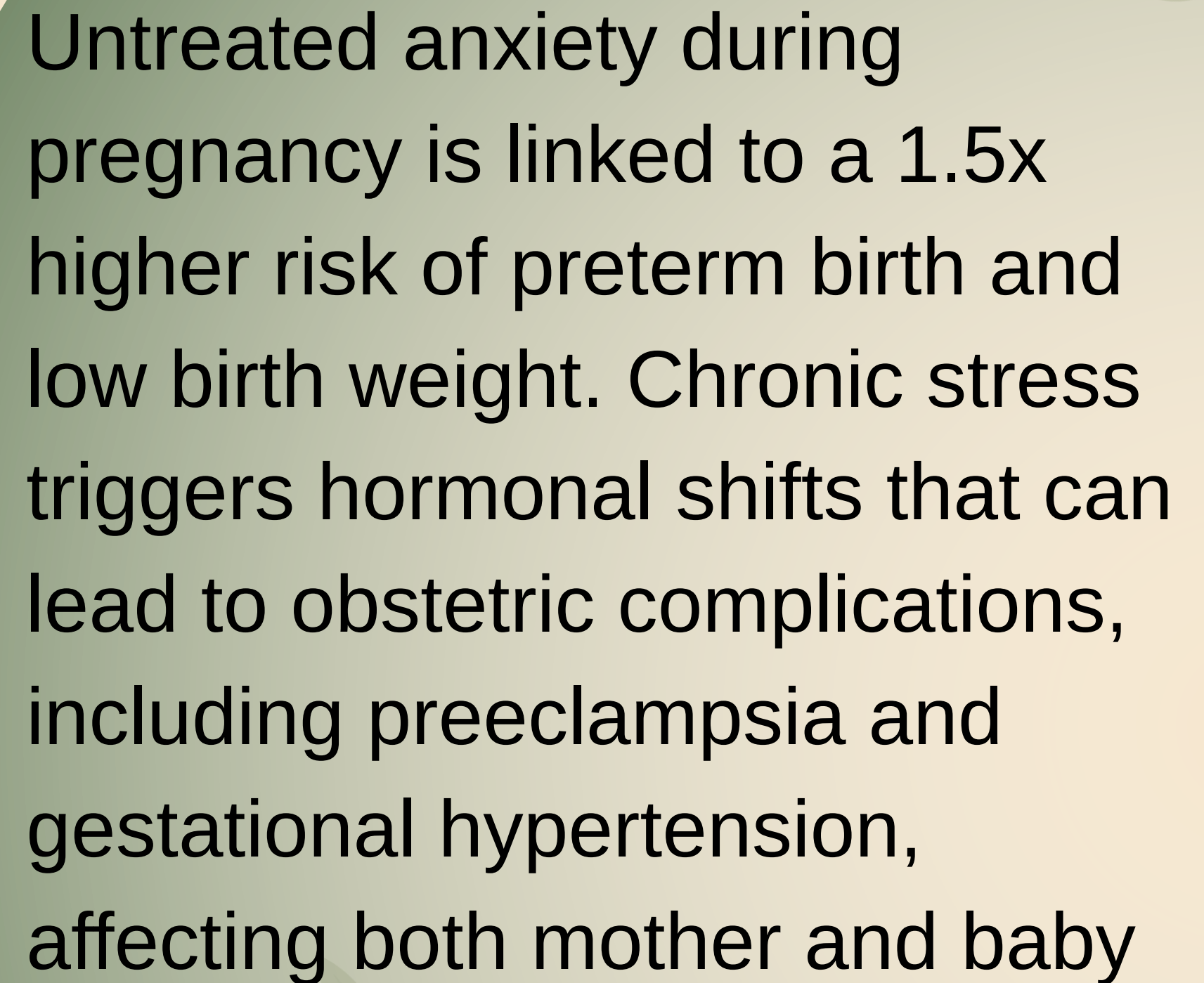
Emotional Instability

Feeling unusually irritable, on the edge or overwhelmed by minor daily stresses




Impact on Maternal and Fetal Health

Risks of Unmanaged
Antenatal Anxiety



Untreated anxiety during pregnancy is linked to a 1.5x higher risk of preterm birth and low birth weight. Chronic stress triggers hormonal shifts that can lead to obstetric complications, including preeclampsia and gestational hypertension, affecting both mother and baby



Long Term Consequences

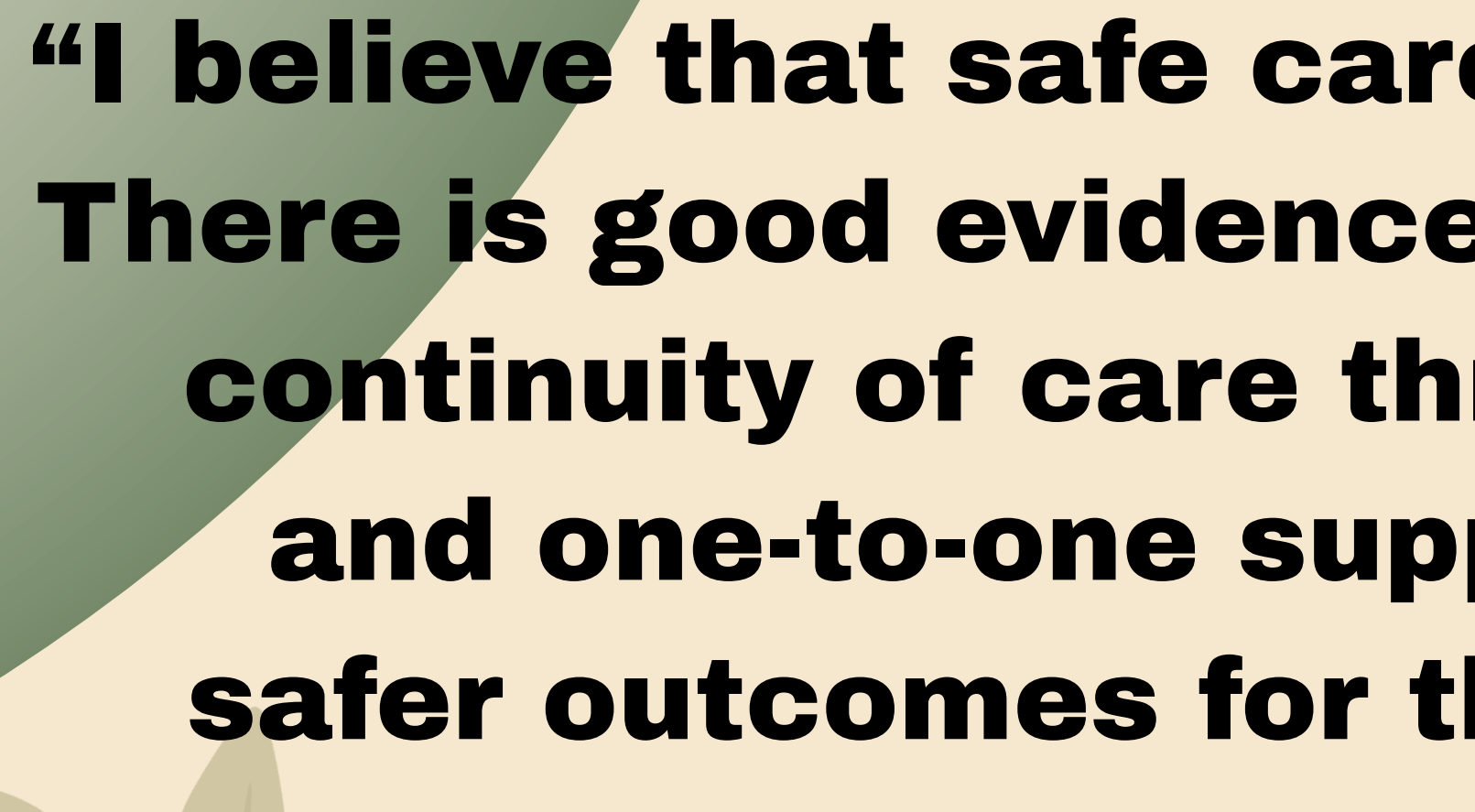
Lasting Effects on
Mother and Child

Antenatal anxiety has been linked to some emotional and behavioural difficulties in children, including ADHD and language delays. For mothers, ongoing stress during pregnancy may also increase the likelihood of postnatal depression and longer-term health concerns, which is why continuity of care is so important.



A photograph showing a person in a white hospital gown lying down, being supported by two healthcare workers in white coats. The workers' hands are visible, resting on the patient's arms and torso. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

**Consistent, Compassionate
Support
Continuity of Care**



“I believe that safe care is personalised care. There is good evidence that women who have continuity of care throughout pregnancy and one-to-one support in labour have safer outcomes for themselves and their babies”

Jeremy Hunt - Birthrights.org.uk



Impact of Continuity

80%



Stress Reduction

Reported decrease in antenatal stress levels

90%



Patient Trust

Reported greater trust in their midwife

65%



Anxiety Levels

Lower levels of anxiety during appointments

75%



Care Satisfaction

Families reported feeling more heard and respected

2x



Improvement in Mental Health

Enhanced emotional wellbeing throughout pregnancy

15%



Intervention Rates

Fewer interventions during labour and birth

Strategies for Continuity

Building a Consistent Relationship

Seeing the same midwife throughout pregnancy allows a trusting relationship to develop, helping women feel heard, respected and more supported

Providing Flexible and Accessible Support

Offering appointments at home and by phone can make support easier to access and help women feel more reassured between visits

Offering Personalised Care Plans

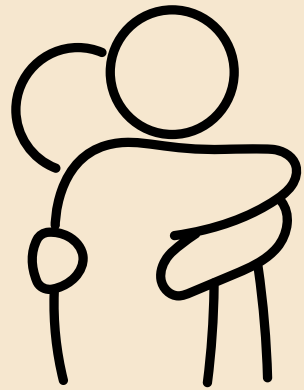
Taking time to understand each woman's preferences, concerns and circumstances helps create care that feels more supportive and compassionate

Supporting Informed Decision-Making

Continuity of care gives women more time to ask questions, discuss their options and make informed decisions with someone they know and trust.

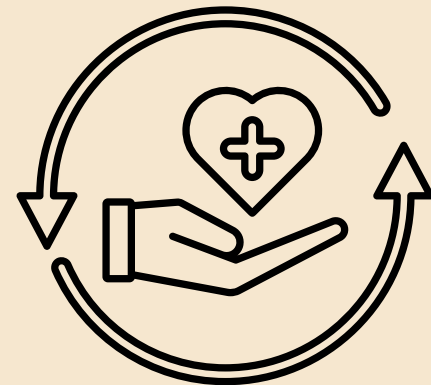
Building Trust & Confidence

Emotional Support



Create a safe and reassuring space where women feel listened to, understood and supported throughout pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period.

Continuity of Care



Build a trusting relationship by seeing the same midwife throughout your journey, reducing anxiety and helping you feel more confident and supported.

Birth Preparation



Provide personalised guidance, education and planning so families feel informed, prepared and empowered for birth and beyond.

Postnatal Wellbeing



Offer ongoing support after birth with feeding, recovery, emotional wellbeing and adjusting to life with a new baby.

Conclusion and Path Forward

The Healing Power of Continuity of Care

Continuity of care is a vital bridge that transforms the pregnancy journey. By building deep trust and providing a steady, familiar presence, this can significantly alleviate maternal anxiety, ensuring every mother feels supported, heard and empowered for a healthier and happier journey.