

"Even six years on, there are still parts that will still come up out of the blue. I'm still affected by the prolapse. That's for life now."

Melissa Smith, 36, experienced a bladder and bowel prolapse after giving birth to her daughter Charleigh in 2016.



Where else to get information and support

BIRTH TRAUMA AOTEAROA
birthtraumaaotearoa.org.nz

HEALTHLINE
0800 611 116

PLUNKET
www.plunket.org.nz
Plunketline 0800 933 922

MANATŪ HAUORA / MINISTRY OF HEALTH
www.health.govt.nz/your-health/pregnancy-and-kids/birth-and-afterwards

NEW ZEALAND COLLEGE OF MIDWIVES
www.midwife.org.nz/women

NGĀ MĀIA MĀORI MIDWIVES OF AOTEAROA
ngamaiaatrust@gmail.com

HEALTH NAVIGATOR
www.healthnavigator.org.nz

PHYSIOTHERAPY FOR PELVIC FLOOR DISORDERS
physio.org.nz/how-physio-helps/pelvic-floor-disorders

For more information

Visit the ACC website to learn more about the support offered for maternal birth injuries:
acc.co.nz/birthinjurycover

Phone 0800 101 996
Email claims@acc.co.nz



Getting help after a birth injury

Information on maternal birth injuries for parents and whānau



He Kaupare. He Manaaki.
He Whakaora.
[prevention.care.recovery.](http://prevention.care.recovery)

The birth of a pēpi (baby) is a momentous occasion, but it can also lead to injuries for the birthing parent. These injuries can initially go unnoticed or be pushed aside with attention focused on caring for a newborn. However, getting treatment and support early on is important. This will help you recover faster and reduce the impact of related injuries in the future.

If you've had an injury while giving birth on or after **1 October 2022**, ACC may be able to help with your recovery.

"Getting the right support early on will improve the woman's quality of life, but it also improves the bonding with the pēpi, the husband – everything works better at home."

Professor Bev Lawton (Ngāti Porou), founder/director of the National Centre for Women's Health Research Aotearoa, Victoria University of Wellington

If you're injured, ACC can help

ACC can offer support for specific maternal birth injuries that happened during labour or delivery on or after 1 October 2022. Some of the more common injuries you may be familiar with include tearing, prolapse and ruptures. Your health provider can diagnose a maternal birth injury.

What to do if you think you have a birth injury

If you think you have a maternal birth injury, talk to your health provider. Your midwife, doctor, nurse, physio, or other health provider can diagnose your injury and lodge an ACC claim for you. This might be right after the birth, or sometime after birth when you need further support and care for your injury.

In some cases, birth injuries can become apparent weeks or months after birth, so it's helpful to be aware of what's normal and what's not, and when to seek help.

Visit our website to learn more about what symptoms to look out for: acc.co.nz/birthinjurycover

Once your claim is accepted

Once your claim is accepted, you can visit any local ACC-registered provider or practitioner to receive treatment and support. That could be a pelvic health physiotherapist, doctor, midwife, osteopath, chiropractor, rongoā Māori practitioner, or other specialised provider. Your support options include traditional rongoā Māori healing services, which provide culturally appropriate care to māmā, birthing parents and whānau. These services include traditional healing methodologies such as mirimiri (bodywork), whitiwhiti kōrero (support and advice), karakia (prayer), and wānanga (group sessions).

You don't need to contact us to arrange your treatment. Not sure who to see? Talk to your health provider, as they can help you identify the type of practitioner you should see.

If you need support to help you at home or need help with transportation for your appointments, we may be able to help. Contact us to discuss your needs.

What to do if you're experiencing mental distress

After giving birth, it's common for some new parents to feel down, depressed, anxious, or suffer from the 'baby blues'. If you are feeling distressed, please reach out for help. Talk to your doctor or midwife and let them know how you're feeling. There are also helplines that can offer support:

ANXIETY LINE

0800 268 438

DEPRESSION HELPLINE

0800 111 757

LIFELINE

0800 543 354 or free text HELP to 4357
(or call 09 5222 999 within Auckland)

PARENT HELP

0800 568 856

SUICIDE CRISIS HELPLINE

0508 828 865 (0508 TAUTOKO)