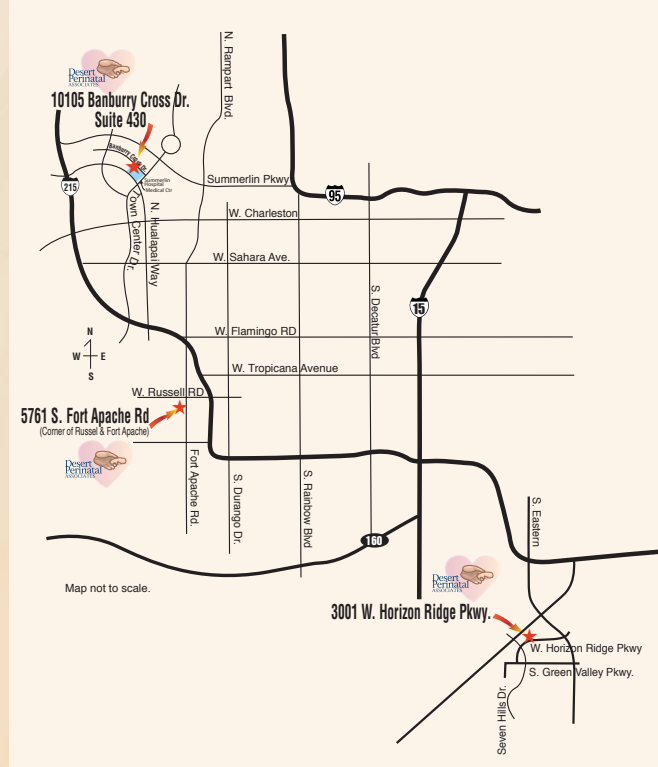


Joan McCraw MSN, FNP, APN, is a Family Nurse Practitioner and Clinical Specialist in Psychiatry. She has experience in acute hospital and out-patient mental health treatment. She can also provide treatment for substance dependence and addictions. For over twelve years, she has been providing care for patients in the Las Vegas area. Prior to this she practiced in Northern California for 20 years. In 2003, she was appointed a State of Nevada Mental Health Commissioner. Ms. McCraw is a consultant at two Las Vegas Hospitals. She is currently providing supportive counseling services at Desert Perinatal Associates Fort Apache Office and may be available at other locations. She also has a busy private practice located in Southwest Las Vegas.



Desert Perinatal ASSOCIATES



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A Guide to Supportive Counseling

How can we help?

Gina has experienced multiple miscarriages and she feels that it is affecting her marriage.

Janet is addicted to prescription pain medications and recently learned she is pregnant. She is concerned about her baby's health.

Mary has been struggling with depression for many years. She is wondering if medication could help her and if it is safe in her pregnancy.

Sheila and Mark have recently received an unexpected diagnosis in their pregnancy and are overwhelmed with feelings of sadness and anger.

These are just a few of the many reasons that a man, woman, or couple may seek additional support with a mental health professional. At Desert Perinatal Associates we are committed to caring for all aspects of pregnancy, including the health of the baby, mother, and family.



What is supportive counseling?

Many people at some time in their lives will experience symptoms such as insomnia, sadness, irritability, mood swings, anger, guilt, or obsessive thinking. Many of these symptoms will resolve with counseling. Supportive counseling can improve a person's insight into their life and help with coping skills. Some individuals may benefit from medication.

At Desert Perinatal Associates, supportive counseling is provided by an Advanced Practice Nurse Practitioner.

Some patients are concerned that a stigma is attached to seeking mental health treatment. However, current research shows that these conditions are like any other medical illness and should be treated as such. At Desert Perinatal Associates we aim to provide for the mental and physical well being of our patients and their families.

Who could benefit from supportive counseling?

The goal is to assist an individual or couple who are experiencing concerns related to a pregnancy or fertility. Specific issues may include, but are not limited to:

- Infertility
- Miscarriage/pregnancy loss
- New diagnosis in pregnancy, affecting mother or fetus
- Depression/anxiety/ mental illness
- Drug / alcohol abuse or dependence
- Conflict in a relationship
- Loss of a loved one
- Diminished quality of life

What is counseling like?

Typically, an individual/couple will meet with the counselor at Desert Perinatal Associates for one hour. This initial visit will address your main concerns and allow the counselor to assess your specific needs. A treatment plan is then created and jointly agreed upon by the patient and counselor. If treatment with medication is recommended, the counselor and Perinatologist will together decide which medication is safest during pregnancy and/or breastfeeding. Follow-up visits will allow for more in depth discussion and would be arranged at the counselor's private practice.

Counseling may be short-term (one to ten sessions) or may be long-term, depending on the needs of the individual/couple. Generally, life crises and situational crises are treated on a short term basis.

Who should attend the counseling session?

This is entirely the choice of the patient. Many patients like to have a spouse, parent, or close friend in the first session; others prefer to discuss their feelings in complete privacy. Information discussed in any meeting is confidential and cannot be discussed with anyone unless the patient has given express written consent.