



# Depression During or After Pregnancy

## Postpartum Depression



### Do you have Postpartum Depression?

“Baby Blues” may occur for a few days after delivery and usually doesn’t last long. Postpartum Depression is a serious mood disorder that is intense and lasts longer. There are a number of reasons or things that cause depression after pregnancy. Your body goes through many changes both physically and emotionally during pregnancy. With a new baby, you have changes in schedules, sleeping, lifestyle, and stresses of caring for a newborn.

A history of depression, substance abuse, stressful events, relationship issues, or financial problems can increase the chances of having Postpartum Depression.

### How do you fix it?

It may be hard to talk about your feelings and you may wish to deal with them on your own, but Postpartum Depression is common and there is help available.

#### Lean on family and friends.

Ask for help with child care to give you a break and help around the house or with errands. Share your feelings and your needs so they can support you.



#### Talk to a health care professional.

Be honest with your provider about your thoughts and feelings. Treatment can include a combination of medication, therapy, or counseling.



#### Find a support group.

You can learn from others and share your feelings.

#### Talk to a mental health professional.

They have training to help you express your feelings and manage your symptoms.

#### Take medications recommended by your health care provider.

### What are the symptoms?



You may be experiencing a few or many of the common symptoms for Postpartum Depression. How often, how long they last, and how intense they feel are different for each person.

- Feeling sad
- Frequent crying, even about little things
- Feeling very anxious
- Worrying too much
- Being irritable or cranky
- Trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Trouble concentrating
- Trouble remembering things
- Trouble making decisions
- Loss of interest in caring for yourself
- Loss of interest in food or overeating
- Not feeling up to doing everyday tasks
- Showing too much or not enough concern for the baby
- Loss of pleasure or interest in things you used to enjoy

If you are having these symptoms, contact a health care or mental health care professional who can help determine if you are suffering from Postpartum Depression and advise a course of action for you.

### How does it affect your family?

Symptoms of Postpartum Depression often affect the entire family; infants, older children, and partners.

Because Postpartum Depression affects the entire family, it is critical that family members recognize the symptoms and help their loved one seek help.



### Take care of yourself

**Focus on wellness.** Taking care of your body is an important step in treating Postpartum Depression.

- Eat healthy. Visit [myplate.gov](http://myplate.gov) for guidance.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Exercise, stretch, and strengthen your muscles.

### Where do you get more info?

There are many resources available. Ask your health care provider for more information to improve your depression.

- National Institute of Mental Health. [www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov)
- Office on Women’s Health. [www.womenshealth.gov/TalkingPPD](http://www.womenshealth.gov/TalkingPPD)
- Centers for Disease Prevention and Control. [www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/features/maternal-depression](http://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/features/maternal-depression)
- Postpartum Support International. <https://www.postpartum.net/>



Getting help is the best thing you can do for you and your baby.

