
What is Postpartum Depression?

Most mothers experience the baby blues shortly after giving birth. This guide will hopefully serve as a jumping off point to learn what this may look like.

Baby blues can consist of difficulty sleeping, crying spells, anxiety and mood swings for up to two weeks. Some moms experience an intense, long lasting form of depression also called Postpartum Depression.

This may include:

- Intense irritability
- Fear that you're not a good mother
- Hopelessness
- Feelings of worthlessness or inadequacy
- Inability to think clearly, concentrate or make decisions
- Restlessness
- Severe anxiety and panic attacks
- Thoughts of harming yourself or your baby
- Recurrent thoughts of death or suicide
- Depressed mood
- Severe mood swings
- Excessive crying
- Difficulty bonding with your baby
- Withdrawing from family and friends
- Loss of appetite or eating much more than usual
- Inability to sleep (insomnia) or sleeping too much
- Overwhelming fatigue or loss of energy
- Reduced interest and pleasure in activities you used to enjoy

Helpful Tips & Reminders

- Individuals struggling with postpartum depression and anxiety are often putting themselves second.
 - **Taking time to eat well, get rest, exercise and have social interactions** with close friends can really lift one's mood.
 - It's very important for women who are experiencing the symptoms above to **make time for regularly eating, drinking, moving their body and resting.**
- We know that mothers who don't get enough sleep are at a higher risk of getting postpartum depression. **A goal is to get approximately 6 hours of sleep in a 24 hour period.**
- *Thinking about the fact that you don't have a chance to do those things?*
 - **Time to get creative.** While the kettle is boiling on the stove, take an opportunity to do 5 squats. While the baby is actively engaged in tummy time, focus on doing some quick stretches to help you get back into your body.

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- **Reach out to sources of support** if you have any. Individuals who are supported begin to feel like themselves faster. Sources of support can include individual therapy sessions, group therapy, having your partner or family member take care of the child so you can sleep, get together with moms, or allowing someone to cook you a meal.
 - Discuss motherhood and mood shifts in individual therapy.
 - Think about joining a support group specifically for new mothers.
 - Ask friends and family for support with meals, chores, etc.
 - Mothers are often holding their baby or breastfeeding which is creating tension in your back, neck and shoulders. **Pay attention to any tension in your body and take time to do quick stretches before and after.**
 - With a baby, everything can seem like an emergency so taking time either with the baby or alone to take some deep breaths and reduce the feeling of being in a heightened state can be calming.
 - **Take deep breaths throughout the day** especially during periods when the baby is crying.