

Depression during and after pregnancy



What you need to know

Being pregnant and having a baby can cause you to have many emotions, including excitement, joy, fear, and anxiety. But it can also result in depression – which is common and treatable.

Postpartum “Baby Blues”

Many new moms experience the “postpartum baby blues” after having their babies, which usually include mood swings, crying spells, anxiety, and difficulty sleeping. “Baby Blues” usually start within the first two to three days after delivery and could last up to two weeks.

Postpartum depression

When new moms have a more severe, long-lasting form of depression, they may be experiencing postpartum depression. Sometimes, postpartum depression is just simply a complication of giving birth. If you have postpartum depression, treatment can help you manage your symptoms and enjoy your baby.

Symptoms of postpartum depression:

- Crying more often than usual
- Feelings of anger
- Withdrawing from loved ones
- Feeling numb or disconnected from your baby
- Worrying that you will hurt the baby
- Feeling guilty about not being a good mom or doubting your ability to care for the baby

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We offer maternity care right in your neighborhood!

High-risk case management

If you are having problems with your pregnancy, our case managers can help and answer any questions you may have.

Questions?

Call our Patient Assistance Line at
(888) 787-1712



Experiences that may put some women at a higher risk for depression:

- Difficulty getting pregnant
- Being a mom to multiples, like twins or triplets
- Losing a baby
- Being a teen mom
- Preterm (before 37 weeks) labor and delivery
- Having a baby with a birth defect or disability
- Pregnancy and birth complications
- Having a baby or infant hospitalized
- Having a history of depression

When to see your doctor

If you are feeling depressed after your baby's birth, you may not be comfortable telling anyone. But if you have any symptoms of postpartum "Baby Blues" or depression, call your doctor and make an appointment.

It's important to call your doctor if your depression does not fade after a couple of weeks, gets worse, makes it hard for you to care for your baby, or includes thoughts of harming yourself or your baby.

Your doctor will talk to you about what you are feeling and suggest treatment, which could include talking to a psychiatrist, psychologist or other mental health provider, or trying an antidepressant. With the right treatment, postpartum depression usually goes away within six months.

Remember, the best way to take care of your baby is to take care of yourself.

Suggestions to prevent or alleviate feelings of postpartum depression:

- Get as much rest as possible
- Take naps when your baby sleeps
- Don't overdo it in the first few weeks after your baby is born
- Ask for and accept help from family and friends
- Make an effort to get out of bed and out of your pajamas; go outside and get some fresh air and sunshine
- Continue to eat healthy and drink at least eight glasses of water every day

Knowledge is power

If you have questions about depression before or after your pregnancy, ask your doctor.

You can also visit the following websites:

March of Dimes:

www.marchofdimes.org

www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/depression/index.htm

Remember: If you have any questions or concerns at any time, make sure you contact your doctor right away.



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