




Postpartum Depression


New moms and dads, adoptive parents, and parents of multiple children may experience the baby blues or postpartum depression.

Baby Blues


Experiencing the baby blues is common among parents. The key to health is to recognize the signs and take care of yourself. The symptoms of the baby blues generally last a week or two after bringing your baby home, and may be managed with self-care and support.

If you are experiencing the baby blues you may feel:


 Sadness


 Crying/Weepy


 Anxiety

 Thoughts That You Feel Off

 Mood Swings


 Trouble Sleeping


 Lack of Energy


 Unable to Concentrate


 Impatience


Understanding that this stage will not last forever can be helpful when managing these or similar feelings. Some other healthy ways to manage the baby blues include:


 Take time for yourself, and do something that you enjoy.


 Reach out to friends and family whom you find supportive. Talk with them about how you are feeling.

 Think about the positive aspects of being a parent. What are you doing well? What qualities do you love about your baby?

 Eat healthy meals and snacks, and drink plenty of water.

 Sleep when your baby is sleeping.

 Connect with a local support group for new parents, or call a hotline to talk with a professional.

 Make time to rest, and enjoy any down time.



Postpartum Depression

Postpartum depression is different than experiencing the baby blues and affects a smaller percentage of parents. The symptoms are generally more intense and tend to last longer.

Postpartum depression can start as early as the first few weeks after you bring your baby home and the symptoms and feelings can last for weeks or well into your baby's first year of life. Recognizing the signs and reaching out and accepting support are the first steps towards treating postpartum depression.

If you are experiencing postpartum depression you may feel:



Very Depressed



Highly Emotional



Angry and Irritable



Unable to Bond with Your Baby



Very Low Energy



Unable to Get Out of Bed and Care for Your Baby



Feelings of Guilt



Severe Mood Swings



Thoughts of Harming Yourself or Your Baby



Safety Alert!

Remember – If you feel you may hurt yourself or your baby, put your child in their crib or another safe place and call for help right away.

Postpartum depression is a form of clinical depression. If you are experiencing the symptoms of postpartum depression, **please take action immediately**.

Arrange an appointment with your health care provider. Your health care provider can connect you with appropriate resources such as peer support groups, individual or group counseling, or more intensive psychiatric treatment, if necessary.

During your appointment, health care providers may ask you questions such as:

- What symptoms are you experiencing?
- At what intensity are you experiencing them?
- How long have you been feeling this way?
- Are your symptoms getting in the way of your daily routine? If so, to what extent?
- Are you using any drugs or alcohol? If so, to what extent?
- Are you having thoughts of hurting yourself or your baby?

It is important that you are honest and open with your health care provider. They are there to help you feel better!



Postpartum depression is treatable. The sooner you get support the sooner you will feel like yourself again. You may feel that you are immune to experiencing it, but postpartum depression can affect anyone, even if this is not your first baby.

How to Get Help

 **In an emergency, call 911.**



Postpartum Support International

1-800-944-4773

<https://www.postpartum.net/>



Postpartum Progress

<https://postpartumprogress.com/>



National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-8225

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/>

Additional resources, skills, and strategies for parents are available at no cost through the online Thrive Initiative programming. Visit the Thrive website <https://thrive.psu.edu>, and sign up today!