



BalanceWorks® Newsletter

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Recognizing Postpartum Depression

Having a baby is a wonderful and exciting experience! However, it is important to remember that a woman's hormones are still in flux for a period of time after giving birth and having a baby completely changes your lifestyle and sleeping schedule. After giving birth women may experience an array of emotions and sensations, most of which are completely normal. Many women confuse these normal feelings, commonly referred to as the "Baby Blues", with the more serious Postpartum Depression.

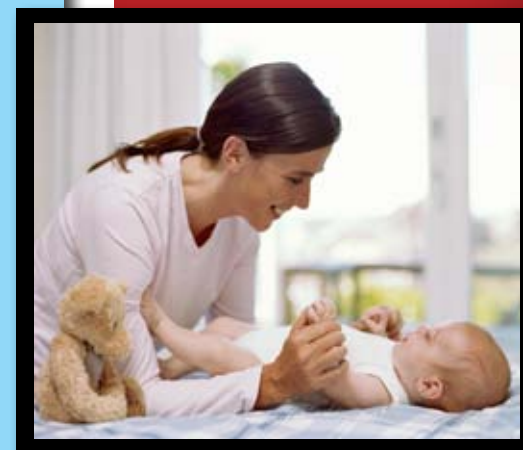
It is important to recognize the difference between these two conditions, so you can seek help right away if you are experiencing depression and you can relax if you just have a common case of new mom jitters. Postpartum depression produces feelings that are much more pronounced and last quite a bit longer than the baby blues.

Common Postpartum Feelings "The Baby Blues"

- Exhaustion
- Discomfort/Achiness
- Sweating
- Elation, blues, or swings between the two
- Apprehension over being able to properly care for your baby
- Frustration
- A feeling of being overwhelmed by the gravity of raising a child
- Excitement about starting a new life with your baby

Warning Signs for Postpartum Depression

- Consistent crying and irritability
- Sleep problems
- Appetite problems
- Persistent feelings of sadness, hopelessness, and helplessness
- Feeling unable to care for yourself or your baby
- Social withdrawal
- Excessive worry
- Aversion to your baby



For more information or support on Postpartum Depression, contact the work/life experts at **BalanceWorks®** by calling:

1.800.327.2255

eni's BalanceWorks® program is a confidential 24/7 service provided by your employer to help achieve work/life balance.



When to Seek Help

Symptoms of postpartum depression can develop as early as 24 hours after giving birth or they can appear as late as a few months after delivery. Although many women try to handle postpartum depression themselves, it's a good idea to call your doctor if you feel unable to cope with daily life, unable to care for your child, have strong feelings of depression, anger, or resentment toward your baby for several weeks to months after giving birth. If you have thoughts of harming yourself or your baby in any way, be sure to call 911 and immediately seek out a trusted friend or loved one to care for your child, while you take care of yourself.

Dealing with Postpartum Depression

Although self care cannot replace professional medical care, there are some steps you can take at home to try and ease your symptoms.

- Be sure to get enough rest. Nap when your baby naps. Ask your partner, a friend, or family member to take care of the baby for a few hours so you can get some rest.
- Talk to other mothers who have successfully made it through postpartum depression. Talking to them will help reassure you that your feelings are normal and that they will eventually pass.
- Shower, get dressed, and get out of the house each day. This will help bring back feelings of "normalcy" and stability to your life.
- If you are in a relationship, schedule time for you and your partner to spend some time alone. It is so important to preserve your bond and not make the baby the focus of your relationship.

- Take some time just for you and partake in activities that preserve your sense of identity. Grab dinner with a friend, get a massage, or plant flowers in your garden. Maintaining balance in your life helps you to see your baby as an enhancement to your life, not a burden.
- Don't expect to be superwoman. Recognize that it is almost impossible to keep up with all the housework, make dinner, and excel at work while caring for a new baby.
- Most importantly, surround yourself with caring friends and family members. Don't be afraid to ask for help. It does not make you a bad mother; it makes you a smart mother!

Helping a Loved One:

If you begin to notice that your partner, wife, sister, or friend are exhibiting signs of postpartum depression, you should begin to lend your support immediately. Ask her how she's been feeling. If she is not open with you, it may help to tell her about your own experience with being a new mom or a story that you've heard about a woman in a similar situation. When she does open up, listen and support her without judgment. Encourage her to seek medical help if necessary. Most importantly, offer your support and understanding. Offer to watch the baby so she can get some rest, exercise, go to the mall, etc. **and** reiterate that with time and proper help, these feelings will pass.

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