



A Partners Guide to Postpartum Mood Disorders

Postpartum Mood Disorders can affect any woman regardless of age, race, ethnicity or economic status:

- **Baby Blues**

About 80% of new mothers experience "baby blues" after delivery. These are the feelings of unhappiness, worry, or fatigue, are mild, last only a few weeks, and usually go away on their own.

- **Postpartum Depression**

Women with Postpartum Depression experience feelings of extreme sadness, anxiety, and exhaustion that make it difficult to carry on their everyday lives.

Some signs that your partner may have Postpartum Depression are:

- Feeling sad, hopeless, empty, or overwhelmed
- Crying more often than usual or for no apparent reason
- Worrying or feeling overly anxious
- Feeling moody, irritable, or restless
- Oversleeping, or being unable to sleep even when baby is asleep
- Having trouble concentrating, remembering details, and making decisions
- Experiencing anger or rage
- Losing interest in activities that are usually enjoyable
- Suffering from physical aches and pains
- Eating too little or too much
- Withdrawing from or avoiding friends and family
- Having trouble bonding or forming an emotional attachment with her baby
- Persistently doubting her ability to care for her baby
- Thinking about harming herself or her baby.

Some women are at greater risk for Postpartum Depression.

Some risk factors are:

- Previous or family history
- Stressful life event such as pregnancy complications or loss of a parent, friend or job.
- Lack of emotional support during pregnancy
- Medical complications
- Alcohol or drug abuse

Without treatment, postpartum depression can last for a long time. Not only does it affect the mother, but it can interfere with her ability to bond with and care for her baby and may cause the baby to have trouble sleeping, eating, and behavior as they grow.

See our "Postpartum Resource List for Families" for community resources and referral information.