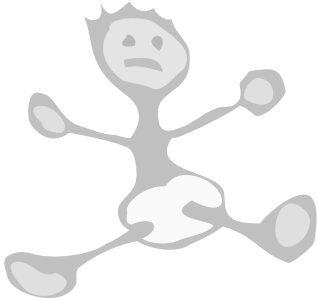


The Facts About Post Partum Depression

Even though having a baby can be an exciting and joyous event, many new mothers experience a mild depression sometimes called the baby blues, and 10 percent of these women experience more severe post partum depression.



Baby Blues

Symptoms of the baby blues usually begin one or two days after delivery and last for up to three weeks. They include:

- Feelings of sadness, anger, anxiety and irritability
- Uncontrollable tearfulness
- Wide mood swings
- Occasional negative thoughts about the baby

To help curb these symptoms, remember to:

- Get plenty of sleep - Babies need well-rested parents to care for them
- Eat a nutritious diet - good nutrition helps your body recover from childbirth and healthy snacks can assist with weight control
- Exercise in moderation - light exercise such as a 30-minute walk three times a week can improve your body and your mood
- Have a social support system - surround yourself with family and friends who are willing to help and listen

Postpartum Depression

Symptoms of postpartum depression are more severe and can occur any time within the first year. They include:

- Constant fatigue
- Lack of joy in life
- Sense of emotional numbness or feeling trapped
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Lack of concern for yourself or your baby
- Severe insomnia
- Excessive concern for your baby
- Loss of sexual interest or responsiveness
- Strong sense of failure and inadequacy
- Severe mood swings
- High expectations and overdemanding attitude
- Difficulty making sense of things

Treatment for these symptoms may include:

- Counseling
- Antidepressant medication
- Hormone therapy
- Attending a local support group

For a complete list of community resources for parents and families, contact United Way 2-1-1™, a confidential, 24-hour community information and referral helpline..

SOURCE:

MAYO FOUNDATION
FOR MEDICAL
EDUCATION AND
RESEARCH (MFMER),
WWW.MAYOCLINIC.COM



Go to www.unitedwaytwincities.org for this and other Tip Sheets.