

**Postpartum Depression**

Postpartum depression is moderate to severe depression in a woman after she has given birth. It may occur soon after delivery or up to a year later. Most of the time, it occurs within the first 3 months after delivery.

**Causes, incidence, and risk factors**

Women commonly have mood changes during pregnancy, especially after delivery.

* These mood changes are frequently caused by changes in hormone levels.
* Many non-hormonal factors may also affect mood during this period:

Changes in your body from pregnancy and delivery

Changes in work and social relationships

Having less time and freedom for yourself

Lack of sleep

Worries about your ability as a mother

Postpartum or “Baby Blues” - Feelings of anxiety, irritation, tearfulness, and restlessness are common in the week or two after pregnancy.."

Postpartum depression - may occur when the baby blues do not fade away or when signs of depression start 1 or more months after childbirth. You may have a higher chance of postpartum depression if you:

* Are nutritionally deficient (especially protein & B Complex)
* Had severe PMS before you got pregnant (due to being progesterone deficient)
* Are hypothyroid
* Are under age 20
* Currently abuse alcohol, take illegal substances, or smoke (these also cause serious medical health risks for the baby)
* Did not plan the pregnancy, or had mixed feelings about the pregnancy
* Had depression or an anxiety disorder before your pregnancy, or with a previous pregnancy
* Had a stressful event during the pregnancy or delivery, including personal illness, death or illness of a loved one, a difficult or emergency delivery, premature delivery, or illness or birth defect in the baby
* Have a close family member who has had depression or anxiety
* Have a poor relationship with your significant other or are single
* Have financial problems (low income, inadequate housing)
* Have little support from family, friends, or your significant other

**Symptoms**

The symptoms of postpartum depression are the same as the symptoms of depression that occurs at other times in life. Along with a sad or depressed mood, you may have some of the following symptoms:

* Agitation or irritability ... significant anxiety
* Changes in appetite
* Feelings of worthlessness or guilt ... Feeling withdrawn or unconnected
* Lack of pleasure or interest in most or all activities
* Loss of concentration ... Problems doing tasks at home or work
* Loss of energy
* Negative feelings toward the baby
* Thoughts of death or suicide
* Trouble sleeping

A mother with postpartum depression may also:

* Be unable to care for herself or her baby
* Be afraid to be alone with her baby
* Have negative feelings toward the baby or even think about harming the baby. If you are thinking of harming yourself or your infant, seek immediate help.
* Worry intensely about the baby, or have little interest in the baby

**Treatment**

A new mother who has any symptoms of postpartum depression should take steps right away to get help.

Here are some other helpful tips:

* Ask your partner, family, and friends for help with the baby's needs and in the home.
* Don't hide your feelings. Talk about them with your partner, family, and friends.
* Don't make any major life changes during pregnancy or right after giving birth.
* Don't try to do too much, or to be perfect.
* Make time to go out, visit friends, or spend time alone with your partner.
* Rest as much as you can. Sleep when the baby is sleeping.

**Natural Support:**

* Shaklee Vitalizer ... a smorgasbord of supplements for overall wellness
* Extra B Complex ... every 2 hours from waking until approximately 5 p.m.
* Eat optimal protein ... have some form of protein every couple of hours throughout the day. For example ... start the day with a Shaklee 180 Smoothee. In a few hours eat a handful of nuts ... in a few hours have a yogurt ... in a few hours have another Shaklee 180 Smoothee ... in a few hours have a Shaklee Cinch Snack Bar ... in a few hours have a scoop of cottage cheese. Then in a few hours have your evening meal.
* Shaklee GLA ... two with each meal to support healthy hormonal production
* Optimize Calcium/Magnesium levels ... if you are nursing, your calcium needs are even higher than when you were pregnant.