

WHAT IS POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION?



Postpartum depression is a condition that affects **10-22%** of women after childbirth. **60%** of women have their first depressive episode in the postpartum period. During this period, there are rapid changes in the hormones, **estradiol and progesterone**, which can contribute to changes in mood. Having postpartum depression does not mean you are a “bad mother” – it only means that there are factors at times out of your control that are affecting your mood.

It differs from other types of depression in that its symptoms are directly related to **stressors associated with motherhood** and caring for a baby. Postpartum depression usually occurs during pregnancy to up to a year postpartum, lasting **weeks or even months**. Postpartum depression is a **common and treatable** condition. However, if not addressed, it can develop into chronic depression.



“**Baby blues**” is milder and appears within 3-4 days after delivery, peaks on day 7, and disappears within 2 weeks, affecting **30-75%** of postpartum women. Baby blues presents with milder symptoms and is not generally treated.

COMMON SYMPTOMS & DISCOMFORTS

- Low mood
- Difficulty sleeping or sleeping more than usual
- Decreased interest or pleasure in almost all activities
- Low self-esteem, feeling guilty or worthless
- Low energy
- Difficulty concentrating
- Appetite changes or weight changes
- Others observe you are more restless or are moving more slowly than usual
- Thoughts, plan, or attempt at harming oneself or the baby
- Withdrawing from loved ones, the baby, family and friends
- Difficulty bonding with the baby
- Feeling overwhelmed with all the new responsibilities
- Feeling you are not meant to be a mother
- Feeling alone or socially isolated

If you are experiencing any of these feelings or symptoms, speak to your healthcare provider. They are here to help you navigate this challenging transition!

RISK FACTORS

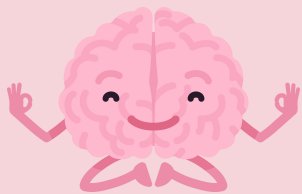
- Previous depression during pregnancy
- Anxiety during pregnancy
- Stressful life events during pregnancy
- Low levels of social support
- Personal or family history of depression



POSTPARTUM PSYCHOSIS

- Postpartum depression can present with “psychotic features”
- These include hearing voices others can’t hear, seeing things that others don’t, or having beliefs that others do not
- Sometimes these voices can tell you to harm your baby
- If you are experiencing any of these symptoms, please see a healthcare provider immediately

WHY SHOULD YOU SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION?



And why is it important for you and your baby to talk to a healthcare provider about what you are feeling?

Possible impacts on infant:

- Worsened delivery outcomes
- Breastfeeding difficulties
- Increased neonatal complications at birth
- Developmental delay
- Difficulty with emotional regulation
- Behavioural and attachment issues

Possible impacts on mother:

- Decreased bonding with baby
- Difficulties in daily functioning
- Persistent low mood
- Increased risk of suicide
- May lead to chronic depression if not treated



Remission of depression has a positive effect on both infant and mother!



SO WHAT CAN WE DO ABOUT POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION?

Lifestyle treatments:

- Physical activity! Exercise with or without your infant has been shown to elevate mood.
- Prioritize sufficient sleep – and delegate some responsibilities to partner if possible.
- Make time for friends and family – social support is so important!



Medical treatments:

- Psychotherapy: Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) or interpersonal psychotherapy (IPT) are the most evidence-based treatments.
- Other treatments include medications such as antidepressants or a combination of psychotherapy and antidepressants – ask your healthcare provider about these options!



RESOURCES FOR SUPPORT

Mount Sinai Hospital - Perinatal Mental Health Program (700 University Ave)

416-586-4800 ext. 8325

Psychiatric care, support groups

Referral form required

Sunnybrook Hospital - Women's Mood and Anxiety Clinic, Reproductive Transitions (2075 Bayview Ave)

416-480-5677

Psychiatric care, therapy, education

Referral form required

Women's College Hospital - Reproductive Life Stages Program (76 Grenville Street, 7th floor)

416-323-6230

Psychiatric care, education, psychotherapy, addiction consultation, parenting support

Referral from family doctor or midwife

Support for Father's Mental Health

www.fathersmentalhealth.com

Father's Mental Health Assessment and Treatment - St. Joseph's Hospital - (30 Queensway, 3rd floor)

416-530-6825

Referral form required

Women's College Hospital - Mother Matters

416-323-6356

8-wk online support group for parents with mood/adjustment challenges – confidential discussion board (no video calls or meetings)

Register on website

Mindfulness-Based Therapy Group or Postpartum Support Group - Mount Sinai Hospital

416-586-4800 ext.8325

Must be followed by a psychiatrist, requires referral from physician

Group for 8 wks on Wednesdays 1-2:45pm

Late Loss Bereavement Support Group - Mount Sinai Hospital

416-586-4800 ext. 8352

Loss after 20+ wks, or neonatal death, self-referral or referral from healthcare provider, Mondays 10:30-12pm

Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)

Patient Label

Mother's OB or Doctor's Name:

Doctor's Phone #:

Since you are either pregnant or have recently had a baby, we want to know how you feel. Please place a **CHECK MARK (✓)** on the blank by the answer that comes closest to how you have felt **IN THE PAST 7 DAYS**—not just how you feel today. Complete all 10 items and find your score by adding each number that appears in parentheses (#) by your checked answer. This is a screening test; not a medical diagnosis. If something doesn't seem right, call your health care provider regardless of your score.

Below is an example already completed.

I have felt happy:
Yes, all of the time _____ (0)
Yes, most of the time ☒ (1)
No, not very often _____ (2)
No, not at all _____ (3)

This would mean: "I have felt happy most of the time" in the past week. Please complete the other questions in the same way.

1. I have been able to laugh and see the funny side of things:
As much as I always could _____ (0)
Not quite so much now _____ (1)
Definitely not so much now _____ (2)
Not at all _____ (3)
2. I have looked forward with enjoyment to things:
As much as I ever did _____ (0)
Rather less than I used to _____ (1)
Definitely less than I used to _____ (2)
Hardly at all _____ (3)
3. I have blamed myself unnecessarily when things went wrong:
Yes, most of the time _____ (3)
Yes, some of the time _____ (2)
Not very often _____ (1)
No, never _____ (0)
4. I have been anxious or worried for no good reason:
No, not at all _____ (0)
Hardly ever _____ (1)
Yes, sometimes _____ (2)
Yes, very often _____ (3)
5. I have felt scared or panicky for no good reason:
Yes, quite a lot _____ (3)
Yes, sometimes _____ (2)
No, not much _____ (1)
No, not at all _____ (0)
6. Things have been getting to me:
Yes, most of the time I haven't been able to cope at all _____ (3)
Yes, sometimes I haven't been coping as well as usual _____ (2)
No, most of the time I have coped quite well _____ (1)
No, I have been coping as well as ever _____ (0)

7. I have been so unhappy that I have had difficulty sleeping:
Yes, most of the time _____ (3)
Yes, sometimes _____ (2)
No, not very often _____ (1)
No, not at all _____ (0)
8. I have felt sad or miserable:
Yes, most of the time _____ (3)
Yes, quite often _____ (2)
Not very often _____ (1)
No, not at all _____ (0)
9. I have been so unhappy that I have been crying:
Yes, most of the time _____ (3)
Yes, quite often _____ (2)
Only occasionally _____ (1)
No, never _____ (0)
10. The thought of harming myself has occurred to me: *
Yes, quite often _____ (3)
Sometimes _____ (2)
Hardly ever _____ (1)
Never _____ (0)

TOTAL YOUR SCORE HERE ►

Thank you for completing this survey. Your doctor will score this survey and discuss the results with you.

Verbal consent to contact above mentioned MD witnessed by: