

# *Postpartum Depression*

Depression after childbirth—also called postpartum depression— is more than just feeling sad or blue for a few days. It is a serious illness that can greatly affect the woman, her baby, and her family.

Some women do not realize they have postpartum depression. Family or friends may be the ones who notice that something is wrong. Once it is diagnosed, postpartum depression can be treated with medication and therapy.

## *Baby Blues and Postpartum Depression*

About 2-3 days after childbirth, some women begin to feel depressed, anxious, and upset. They may feel angry with the new baby, their partners, or their other children. They also may

- Cry for no clear reason
- Have trouble sleeping, eating, and making choices
- Question whether they can handle caring for a baby

These feelings, often called the baby blues, may come and go in the first few days after childbirth. The baby blues usually get better within a few days or 1-2 weeks without any treatment. If they do not go away or become more intense, this may be a sign of a more serious condition called postpartum depression.

Women with postpartum depression have intense feelings of sadness, anxiety or despair that prevent them from being able to do their daily tasks. Postpartum depression can occur up to 1 year after having a baby, but it most commonly starts about 1-3 weeks after childbirth.

## *Reasons for Postpartum Depression*

Postpartum depression probably is caused by a combination of body, mind, and lifestyle factors. No two women have the same physical makeup of life experiences. These differences may be why some women have postpartum depression and others do not.

Source: <https://www.acog.org>