

## Stress, baby blues and postpartum depression

### Feeling stressed and overwhelmed

Here's what you can do if you're feeling overwhelmed about being a new mom:

- Tell your partner how you feel.
- Ask your partner, family and friends for help taking care of the baby and the housework.
- Find a support group for new moms. Ask your health care provider to help you find a group.
- Eat healthy foods and be active when you can.
- Don't smoke, drink alcohol, use street drugs or abuse prescription drugs.

### Baby blues

Baby blues are feelings of sadness that some women have 3 to 5 days after having a baby. You may feel sad or cranky, or you may cry a lot. If you think you have the baby blues:

- Talk to your partner or a friend about how you feel.
- Rest when you can. Try to sleep when the baby sleeps.
- Ask your partner, family and friends to help care for the baby.
- Take time for herself. Get out of the house every day, even if it's just for a short while.

If the sad feelings don't go away by about 10 days after your baby's birth, tell your provider.

### Postpartum depression (PPD)

Postpartum depression is a kind of depression that some women get after having a baby. It means you have strong feelings of sadness or worry that last for a long time. These feelings can make it hard for you to take care of your baby. PPD can happen any time in the first year after childbirth. It often starts within 1 to 3 weeks of having a baby. It's a medical condition that needs treatment to get better.

You may have PPD if you have 5 or more signs of PPD that last more than 2 weeks. These are the signs to look for:

#### Changes in your feelings

- Feeling depressed or worried most of the day every day
- Feeling shame, guilt, worthless or like a failure
- Having more bad days than good days
- Feeling panicky or scared a lot of the time
- Having severe mood swings

#### Changes in your everyday life

- Having little interest in things you normally like to do
- Feeling tired all the time
- Eating a lot more or a lot less than is normal for you
- Gaining or losing weight
- Not sleeping well or sleeping too much
- Having trouble concentrating or making decisions

#### Changes in how you think about yourself or your baby

- Having trouble bonding with your baby
- Thinking about hurting yourself or your baby

If you think you have PPD, call your health care provider right away.



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