



## Don't be afraid to talk about the baby blues, depression and anxiety after the birth of your baby

A new mother may have many different feelings ranging from joy and excitement to guilt and sadness. These feelings are normal after such a life-changing event as having a baby. The causes of these feelings are not completely understood. These may include having to adjust to the sudden responsibility of caring for your newborn, lack of sleep, hormone changes in your body following birth, stress, and not feeling support from family and friends.

### Are you a mother who is feeling:

- sad
- overwhelmed
- anxious
- inadequate
- alone
- guilty
- nervous
- angry

### Do you

- feel tired all the time
- cry for no reason
- feel panicky and not able to cope
- have trouble sleeping even when the baby is sleeping
- worry too much about your health and your baby's health
- feel you want to be alone
- get upset or angry easily
- have trouble concentrating
- want to run away
- have scary thoughts and feelings about yourself and your baby

### Are you a new mother who is new to Canada? Do you feel

- lonely because your family and friends are far away?
- unfamiliar with Canada's health-care system?
- you are missing familiar comforts, traditions and rituals?

**If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you are not alone.**



## BABY BLUES

- Eight out of ten new mothers get the baby blues.
- Symptoms included feeling sad, overwhelmed, tired.
- Symptoms begin a few days after birth, last a short time and disappear on their own.

## POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

- One in five mothers may feel a depression that does not go away after a short time.
- It can happen within days of the birth or adoption of a child.
- Symptoms can appear gradually and sometimes up to a year following the birth.

## POSTPARTUM PSYCHOSIS

- Rare and severe affecting one or two women in 1000.
- Defined as being out of touch with reality and women may be experience hallucinations.
- Immediate medical treatment is needed.

### **Women who have experienced postpartum depression have said...**

- "I feel like running away, I feel like everything is crowding in on me".
- "I am a bad mother, I shouldn't feel sad, I expected things to be different".
- "I wish someone had warned me that this could happen".

### **Why are so many women afraid to seek help and try to hide their feelings?**

- May feel guilt and shame and fear the label "mentally ill".
- Health-care professionals may not recognize depression or anxiety.
- Partners, family and friends may not take the mother's feelings seriously.

## THINGS THAT MAY HELP

- Get some rest during the day.
- Sleep when you can.
- Ask friends and family for help.
- Eat good and comforting foods frequently.
- Make a simple plan for your day.
- Arrange for someone that you trust to care for the baby sometimes.
- Speak to a nurse, your midwife, your doctor, friend or counselor, and ask for contact information for a postpartum support program.
- Support is available to you. **Call:**
  - Your family doctor
  - Your obstetrician or midwife



## POST PARTUM DEPRESSION SUPPORT

**Our Sister's Place** is a Toronto-based organization that provides peer support, public education and professional resources on the topic of mood disorders associated with hormonal change. The website offers an online postpartum depression support group.

<http://www.oursistersplace.ca>

**Mental Health Services Information Ontario** gives you mental health services including counseling in your area at <http://www.mhsio.on.ca/PPMD>

**Mental Health Services Information Ontario** 1-866-531-2600

### **Pacific Postpartum Support Society**

A website for mothers experiencing post partum related mood disorders. The site offers information and suggestions for assistance.

<http://www.postpartum.org>

### **Postpartum Support International**

A website for mothers and fathers experiencing post partum related mood disorders. The site offers information and suggestions for assistance.

<http://www.postpartum.net>

### **Online PPD Support Group**

<http://www.ppdsupportpage.com>

**The Postpartum Stress Center** The Postpartum Stress Center is a US-based facility and website that offers structured and self-help supports for women and their families living with postpartum depression.

<http://www.postpartumstress.com>

## MISCELLANEOUS

### **Canadian Down Syndrome Society**

[http://www.cdss.ca/site/about\\_us/welcome.php](http://www.cdss.ca/site/about_us/welcome.php)

### **Cord Blood**

<http://www.cordbloodsociety.com/>

### **Canadian Health Network**

<http://www.canadian-health-network.ca>

