

# POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION



Many new moms experience postpartum depression. In 80% of these cases, it is mild and dissipates quickly (postpartum melancholy or "Baby Blues"). However, the true postpartum depression, more intense and lasting, is suffered by 10 to 15% of all new moms. Postpartum depression is the development of depression in the mother after the birth of her baby. Sometimes, this depression can be present in moms whose baby has not been wanted or because he was born with health complications. However, in most cases postpartum depression does not seem to have a cause.

## SYMPTOMS

Symptoms can range from mild to severe and persist from three months to a year. These include:

- Sadness or despair
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Appetite disorders
- Irritability or exaggerated mood swings
- Fatigue and physical exhaustion
- Difficulty concentrating, confusion, and memory loss
- Uncontrollable crying
- Lack of interest in the baby
- Guilt and low self-esteem
- Anxiety or panic
- Inability to deal with everyday situations
- Inability to take care of yourself and your baby
- Difficulty performing the usual tasks at home or work.
- Thoughts of hurting yourself or the baby

Although the causes are unknown, postpartum depression is associated with hormonal factors and stress. Women who had postpartum depression after previous pregnancies may be less likely to have it again if they start taking antidepressants after childbirth. Having a good system of social support from family and family members can help reduce the severity of postpartum depression, although you may not be able to prevent it. Assessment questionnaires such as the Edinburgh test can help with early detection of postpartum depression or the risks of suffering from it. They are available through the gynecologist/obstetrician, psychologist or psychiatrist and the Triple-S Health Clinical Care Program.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Take advantage of every opportunity to rest. Taking a nap is recommended.
- Allow others to take care of the baby.
- Find time to enjoy and have fun with your partner.
- Identify someone you can trust.
- Do not be afraid to ask for help when you need it.
- Do not try to be a "super woman."



For more information, please contact the Clinical Management Unit at **787-706-2552** or [commercialclinicalmanagement@ssspr.com](mailto:commercialclinicalmanagement@ssspr.com)



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