



## Postpartum (After giving birth) Blues:

- \* up to 80% of mothers can get the “blues” within 3-5 days of giving birth .
- \* you may have rapid mood swings such as feeling happy to sad.
- \* You may feel helpless, worried, or irritable
- \* You may cry for what seems like no reason.

These are normal feelings and responses when women have the postpartum blues.

They usually pass in a week or two without treatment.

\*If your mood does not get better after the first 2 weeks of giving birth , you could have postpartum depression. You will need some help to cope with postpartum depression.

## Postpartum Depression (PPD):

- \* can affect between 10-25% of women
- \* even though it is called postpartum depression, meaning after you have had your baby, for some women it can start at other times. It can begin during pregnancy or right after giving birth. It can also happen anytime in the first year after delivery.

## What is postpartum depression (PPD)?

If you have postpartum depression you may:

- \* feel tired, worried or anxious
- \* feel worthless
- \* feel “ numb”. This makes it seem you are unable to care about things you usually would care about.
- \* feel irritable or angry.
- \* feel you are not good enough.
- \* feel resentment toward your baby.
- \* have crying spells for what seems like no reason.
- \* find it hard to stay focused or feel like your thoughts are disorganized
- \* have guilty thoughts.
- \* be unable to sleep or rest properly.
- \* have frightening thoughts which may include fear of harming the baby.
- \* feel hopeless about the future.
- \* have thoughts of ending your life.

Many women who are experiencing postpartum depression know there is something wrong but don't go for help because they are embarrassed or afraid to talk about it. Postpartum depression is a medical condition. With treatment you will be able to function better in all areas of your life.



PPD Myths	PPD Facts
You can just “snap out” of your depression.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If you are having moderate to severe PPD you need to be treated .</li> <li>• Antidepressant medication often helps to shorten the amount of time you feel this way and also makes the symptoms less intense.</li> </ul>
Depression will not affect your mothering skills or your baby	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Untreated, PPD affects your ability to bond with your baby. It may also affect your child’s functioning in preschool.</li> </ul>
You won’t recover from depression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a very good chance you will recover from PPD when you are treated for it.</li> </ul>
Only “weak”, “lazy” or “bad” mothers get depressed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Major depression is a biological illness (chemical imbalances in the brain) that can be inherited.</li> <li>• You may not know you are depressed because you are so busy caring for your newborn</li> <li>• Depressed moms cannot just change their symptoms. Having PPD is not a reflection of your mothering skills.</li> </ul>

## Ways to Treat PPD:

Depression affects your mind, body, thinking, emotions, behaviours and habits. Research supports that often the best way to treat a woman who has PPD is by combining a number of different approaches which can include counseling, medication, support groups, with lifestyle changes such as regular exercise.

## Where to Get Help:

If you are aware of the above symptoms in yourself, your partner or a family member, please contact your:

- \* family doctor or obstetrician
- \* midwife
- \* public health nurse
- \* psychiatrist
- \* local mental health centre (1-800-661-2121)
- \* Registered psychologist 1-800-730-0522 or Registered Clinical Counselor 1-800-909-6303
- \* Pacific Postpartum Support Society provides telephone support (604-255-7999) or [www.postpartum.org](http://www.postpartum.org)

Your doctor may also refer you to the Reproductive Mental Health Program (604-875-2025 or [www.bcwomens.ca](http://www.bcwomens.ca))

For information on self care choices please refer to the ‘Self-care Program for Women with Postpartum Depression and Anxiety: A Patient Guide’ which can be found online at [www.bcwomens.ca](http://www.bcwomens.ca) (enter ‘Self-Care’ in the search box).