

# UNDERSTAND YOUR FEELINGS AFTER GIVING BIRTH

## WHAT IS POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION?

Postpartum depression (PPD) are strong feelings of sadness, anxiety and tiredness that last longer than 2 weeks after giving birth. Often starting within 1 to 3 weeks of having a baby—though it can happen any time—it's the most common medical complication for new moms. PPD can make it hard to take care of yourself and your baby. If you think you have PPD, tell your provider.

You didn't do anything to cause PPD. It doesn't make you a bad person or a bad mother.



### Is postpartum depression (PPD) the same as the baby blues?

No. PPD lasts longer and is more serious than baby blues, which are feelings of sadness you may have after having a baby. Baby blues can happen 2 to 3 days after you give birth and can last up to 2 weeks. You may have trouble sleeping, be moody or cranky, and cry a lot. If you have sad feelings that last longer than 2 weeks, tell your provider.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF PPD

You may have PPD if you have five or more signs and symptoms below that last longer than 2 weeks.

### Changes in feelings

- Feeling intensely sad most of the day, every day
- Feeling shame, guilt or like a failure
- Feeling panicked or scared a lot
- Having severe mood swings

### Changes in 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 normal
- Gaining or losing weight
- Having trouble sleeping 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
- Thinking about suicide (killing yourself)

**Getting treatment for PPD can help you feel better and be able to care for your baby**

## TAKE ACTION

If you're at increased risk for PPD, certain kinds of counseling can help prevent it. Reach out to your provider if you have one or more of these risks:

- You currently have signs or symptoms of depression.
- You've had depression or another mental health condition in the past.
- You're a teenager or a single mom.
- You have stresses in your life, such as low income.
- You've been abused by your partner (also called intimate partner violence or IPV).

**If you think you may have PPD, see your health care provider right away. Your provider can be:**

- Your prenatal care provider
- Your primary care provider
- A mental health provider
- Your baby's health care provider



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**If you're thinking of hurting yourself or your baby, call emergency services (911)**

**Go to [marchofdimes.org/PPD](https://marchofdimes.org/PPD) for more information and resources**