

Understanding Postpartum Depression (PPD)

Having a baby can be an exciting and joyful time for many new mothers. However, for those who develop PPD, this time can instead become distressing and difficult. Many women suffer in silence, but greater awareness and understanding can lead to better outcomes for women and their babies.

IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT PPD

<p>As many as 75% of people experience baby blues after delivery.¹</p> 	<p>1 in 8 women report symptoms of depression after giving birth.²</p> 
<p>About 40% of women with PPD will relapse either during a subsequent pregnancy or unrelated to pregnancy.³</p>	<p>This time can impact new fathers as well – an estimated 4% of fathers experience depression in the first year after their child's birth.⁴</p>
<p>PPD can affect a mother's ability to bond with and care for her baby.²</p> 	<p>If left untreated, PPD can also impact not only the mother's health, but can also impact the baby and lead to challenges with sleeping, eating and behavior.²</p> 

SYMPTOMS OF PPD CAN BE SIMILAR TO MAJOR DEPRESSIVE DISORDER²

Baby Blues	Postpartum Depression	Major Depressive Disorder ⁵
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very common • Usually starts 2-3 days after birth • May experience feelings of worry, unhappiness, and fatigue • Usually gets better on its own within 2 weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually starts 1-3 weeks after birth • Interferes with ability to do daily life activities • Intense symptoms of sadness, anxiety, and hopelessness • May include loss of interest in activities, withdrawing from friends and family, or thoughts of hurting self or baby • Can occur up to a year after birth • Usually requires treatment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low energy or fatigue • Feeling very sad, hopeless, or worried • Having thoughts of self-harm • Loss of interest in hobbies and activities • Changes in sleep patterns • Changes in eating behavior • Difficulty concentrating or making decisions

HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS NEED TO INCREASE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT PPD WITH THEIR PATIENTS

~20%

About 1 in 5 women were not asked about symptoms of depression by their provider during a prenatal visit.



~12.5%

About 1 in 8 women were not asked about symptoms of depression by their provider during a postpartum visit.



~50%

Over half of pregnant women with depression were not treated.



- Ask every pregnant and postpartum woman about signs and symptoms of depression at each visit.
- Know local resources to help guide identified patients for referral to treatment and follow-up.

References

1. Postpartum depression: causes, symptoms & treatment. Cleveland Clinic. Accessed May 19, 2023. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9312-postpartum-depression>
2. Identifying maternal depression. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Reviewed May 2, 2022. Accessed May 19, 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/reproductivehealth/vital-signs/identifying-maternal-depression/index.html>
3. Stewart DE, Vigod SN. Postpartum depression: pathophysiology, treatment, and emerging therapeutics. *Annu Rev Med*. 2019;70(1):183-196. doi: 10.1146/annurev-med-041217-011106
4. What is peripartum depression (formerly postpartum). American Psychiatric Association. Reviewed October 2020. Accessed May 19, 2023. <https://psychiatry.org/patients-families/peripartum-depression/what-is-peripartum-depression>
5. Depression. Cleveland Clinic. Reviewed January 13, 2023. Accessed May 23, 2023. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/9290-depression>