Healthy You: Quick Facts

The NATION'S HEALTH

Postpartum depression: You are not alone

After you give birth, your body usually feels different. Your thinking and mood may feel different too. Sometimes people feel sad, anxious or "flat" after giving birth. These can be signs of postpartum depression.

It is a common condition. Yet many parents are afraid to say how they feel. The good news is you're not alone and can be helped.



Photo above by JackF, below by Urbazon, courtesy iStockphoto

Quick facts and tips:

1 There are many other symptoms of postpartum depression. For example, you may feel sad, angry or have repeated thoughts. It's not a sign that you're a bad person or parent. Postpartum depression is a health condition that can be treated.



2 Don't blame yourself. Anyone can have depression after having a baby. But you are more at risk if you already have anxiety or feel sad a lot of the time before giving birth.

3 Do not keep your feelings to yourself. Tell your doctor, midwife, nurse or even your baby's doctor. If the first person you tell doesn't take you seriously, tell someone else. Keep sharing until someone listens. Ask them how to get help.

4 If you know someone who is struggling, you can help too. Bring dinner. Hold the baby for a few hours so the parents can sleep. Drive them to an appointment. Remind them that help is available.

5 Free help is available. Call or text the Postpartum Support International helpline at 1-800-944-4773, or visit www.postpartum.net.

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