

# Depression During and After Pregnancy

Moms and moms-to-be deserve the best,— including the very best mental health. Depression during and after pregnancy is common and treatable. If you think you have depression, seek treatment from your health care provider as soon as possible.

## Depression Causes Severe Symptoms That Affect Daily Life

Everyone feels sad sometimes, but these feelings normally pass within a few days. Depression is a serious mood disorder that may last for weeks or months at a time.

## Depression Doesn't Feel the Same for Everyone

Some people may experience a few symptoms, and others might experience many. How often symptoms occur, how long they last, and how intense they may feel can be different for each person.

## Depression Symptoms

- Having a lasting sad, anxious, or "empty" mood.
- Feelings of hopelessness or pessimism.
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, or helplessness.
- Feelings of irritability or restlessness.
- Problems concentrating, recalling details, and making decisions.
- Loss of energy.
- Difficulty falling asleep or sleeping too much.
- Overeating or loss of appetite.
- Suicidal thoughts or suicide attempts.
- Aches or pains that do not get better with treatment.

## Postpartum Depression Is Different From the Baby Blues

Postpartum depression is depression that occurs after having a baby. Feelings of postpartum depression are more intense and last longer than those of "baby blues," a term used to describe the worry, sadness, and tiredness many women experience after having a baby.

## Symptoms of Postpartum Depression

The symptoms of postpartum depression are similar to symptoms of depression, but may also include:

- Crying more often than usual.
- Feelings of anger.
- Withdrawing from loved ones.
- Feeling distant from your baby.
- Worrying or feeling overly anxious.
- Thinking about hurting yourself or your baby.
- Doubting your ability to care for your baby.

## Depression During and After Pregnancy Is Common and Treatable

Recent CDC research shows that about 1 in 8 women experience symptoms of postpartum depression. Additionally, a recent analysis by CDC found the rate of depression diagnoses at delivery is increasing and it was seven times higher in 2015 than in 2000.

Having a baby is challenging and every woman deserves support. If you are experiencing emotional changes or think that you may be depressed, make an appointment to talk to your health care provider as soon as possible. Most people get better with treatment and getting help is the best thing you can do for you and your baby.

Effective depression treatment can include a combination of medication therapy, counseling, and referrals. After a visit with your health care provider, make sure to follow-up on all referrals and treatment that he or she suggests. When discussing medications with your provider, let her or him know if you are pregnant, thinking about becoming pregnant, or breastfeeding. You and your provider can decide if taking medicine while pregnant or breastfeeding is right for you.

## Resources

- [National Maternal Mental Health Hotline](#) 24/7, free, confidential hotline for pregnant and new moms in English and Spanish. Call or text **1-833-943-5746** (1-833-9-HELP4MOMS). TTY users can use a preferred relay service or dial 711 and then 1-833-943-5746.
- [Postpartum Support International](#) Call the PSI HelpLine at **1-800-944-4773**, #1 En Español or #2 English. Text "Help" to 800-944-4773 (EN). Text en Español: 971-203-7773.
- [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for professionals in the United States. Call or text **988**.

Source: Division of Reproductive Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Depression During and After Pregnancy. Retrieved February 27, 2023, from CDC.gov.

This information is not intended to replace professional care. Please call your EAP if professional care is needed.  
The EAP offers assessment, counseling and referral to appropriate resources.