



MASSACHUSETTS

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Postpartum Depression

“When the blues won’t go away”

Facts about Postpartum Depression (PPD)

- Postpartum depression is a serious condition that affects 10–15 percent of all new mothers.
- Postpartum depression requires treatment; it does not go away on its own.
- Many women do not seek treatment for postpartum depression, and those who do often wait three to nine months before asking for help. Babies are less likely to receive proper care when postpartum depression is not treated.
- There are safe and effective treatments for postpartum depression.

A Time of Change

The birth of a child is often a happy occasion, but for some mothers, the physical changes and personal challenges that come after delivery can lead to a condition called postpartum depression. The good news is that there are safe and effective treatments for postpartum depression.

Baby Blues

Over half of all new mothers experience the postpartum blues. This is a short period after delivery when a woman may feel mild sadness, some irritability, or a sense of worry. The good news is that most women recover from the postpartum blues within two weeks of delivery.

If you think you might have the postpartum blues, ask your health care provider for more information. Let your friends and family know what is going on, and ask them to be patient and supportive.

Postpartum Depression

Postpartum depression is more serious than the postpartum blues. It lasts longer, doesn’t go away on its own, and is more likely to get worse if it’s not properly treated. Postpartum depression affects women in different ways. Some of the more common symptoms are:

- Feelings of hopelessness or sadness most of the time
- A constant lack of energy, or difficulty enjoying things that used to be fun
- Sleeping or eating too much or too little
- Poor concentration or memory
- Nagging worries about your baby’s health, or your ability to be a good mother
- Thoughts of hurting yourself or your child
- Aches or pains that won’t go away, but don’t seem to have a cause

Postpartum Depression and Your Baby

Newborns require a lot of attention, but caring for a baby and dealing with postpartum depression can be too much to handle. Early and effective care makes it easier to give your newborn the attention he or she needs to be physically and emotionally healthy.



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Helping Yourself

You play a key role in managing your care. That's why it's so important to stay informed. Information on postpartum depression is available at your local library, at bookstores, and on the Internet. We recommend *Postpartum Survival Guide* by A. Dunnewald and D.G. Sanford, and *Beyond The Blues, Prenatal And Postpartum Depression: A Treatment Manual* by Shoshana Bennett and Pec Indman.

For more information on the subject, visit one of the following websites:

- Postpartum Support International www.chss.iup.edu/postpartum
- National Depressive and Manic Depressive Association www.ndmda.org (to find local support groups).

Getting Help

If you find that you are experiencing symptoms of postpartum depression, either now or in the future, talk to your doctor about your concerns. You can also call the toll-free number for behavioral health on your BCBSMA ID card to reach someone who can help you find care in your area.

Get Help Immediately If You:

- Are thinking of hurting your baby, yourself, or others
- Are having trouble properly caring for yourself or your baby

Get Into a “Recovery Routine”

- Practice healthy habits
- Exercise three times a week
- Spend time with family and friends
- Make time for yourself every day
- Look for what's good in your life
- Reward yourself for reaching small goals

Information in this fact sheet has been provided by Magellan Behavioral Health.