

Talk to your loved ones about the signs of postpartum depression



Postpartum depression (PPD) is more common than you may think.

PPD is one of the more common medical complications during and after pregnancy. Approximately 1 in 8 mothers in the United States report experiencing symptoms of PPD each year. Perinatal (including postpartum) depression can affect any woman, regardless of her age, number of kids, ethnicity, marital status, or income. While only a doctor can make a formal diagnosis of PPD, it's important for you and your loved ones to understand the signs and symptoms.

The signs of PPD aren't the same for every woman. Make a plan with your loved ones to watch out for any changes in your mood after you give birth.

Moms with PPD may show multiple signs and symptoms that can last for more than 2 weeks, including:

- Persistent sad, anxious, or "empty" mood
- Irritability
- Trouble bonding or forming an emotional attachment with the new baby
- Persistent doubts about the ability to care for the new baby
- Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, hopelessness, or helplessness
- Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities
- Fatigue or abnormal decrease in energy
- Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions
- Difficulty sleeping (even when the baby is sleeping), waking early in the morning, or oversleeping
- Abnormal appetite, weight changes, or both
- Feeling restless or having trouble sitting still
- Aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems that do not have a clear physical cause or that do not ease even with treatment
- Thoughts about death, suicide, or harming oneself or the baby



Talk to your doctor if you think you may be experiencing any of these symptoms.

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Preparing for the possibility of PPD

Here are a few talking points to help you start the conversation with your loved ones:

- I want to talk about PPD so that we can be prepared in case it happens
- PPD is a common condition that can affect the whole family. It's important to me to know that I can talk to you openly and honestly. Lately I've been feeling...
- The symptoms of PPD can leave women feeling overwhelmed by childcare responsibilities. Can I count on you for support if I experience PPD?
- PPD is a medical condition. We should discuss it with my doctor if we spot any of the signs
- Can I trust you to listen to how I'm feeling and accept what I'm saying without judgment?

Notes:



Have a conversation. Make a plan.

Talking about PPD with your doctor and loved ones can help you be prepared if PPD happens to you. Remember, only your doctor can make a formal diagnosis of PPD.

Visit mycheckonmom.com to learn more.

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