

“Baby blues” vs postpartum depression

In the initial days after giving birth, moms may sometimes feel worried, irritable, and tearful. This is known as the “baby blues” and it’s quite common. But, depending on when these feelings begin, how intense they are, and how long they last, they may indicate postpartum depression (PPD).

If Mom or her mom team is concerned about her mental wellness, Mom should talk to her healthcare provider about how she is feeling.

When does it start? How long does it last?

Baby blues	Postpartum depression
Symptoms usually peak in the first few days after delivery, then resolve within 10-14 days without treatment.	PPD symptoms can occur during pregnancy or after delivery. When left untreated, symptoms may persist for months or up to 1 year.

Symptoms

Baby blues	Postpartum depression
<p>The baby blues are characterized by mild symptoms but do not impact Mom’s ability to care for herself or her baby.</p> <p>Symptoms include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mood changes • Feelings of worry • Tearfulness • Sadness • Irritability or anger • Sleep difficulties • Fatigue • Anxiety 	<p>PPD symptoms can be more severe and persistent and can interfere with daily activities and Mom’s ability to care for the baby.</p> <p>Symptoms include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persistent sad, anxious, or “empty” mood irritability • Feelings of guilt, worthlessness, hopelessness, or helplessness • Loss of interest or pleasure in hobbies and activities • Fatigue or abnormal decrease in energy • Feeling restless or having trouble sitting still • Difficulty concentrating, remembering, or making decisions • Difficulty sleeping (even when the baby is sleeping), awakening early in the morning, or oversleeping • Abnormal appetite, weight changes, or both • Aches or pains, headaches, cramps, or digestive problems that do not have a clear physical cause or do not ease even with treatment • Trouble bonding or forming an emotional attachment with the new baby • Persistent doubts about the ability to care for the new baby • Thoughts about death, suicide, or harming oneself or the baby

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Baby blues vs PPD: By the numbers

Baby blues

The baby blues affects 50%-80% of women after childbirth.

Postpartum depression

In the US, approximately 1 in 8 moms experiences symptoms of postpartum depression.