



Post Partum Depression

While life with a new baby can be thrilling and rewarding, it can also be hard and stressful at times. Many physical and emotional changes happen to a woman when she is pregnant and after she gives birth. These changes can leave new mothers feeling sad, anxious, afraid, or confused. For many women, these feelings (sometimes called the “baby blues”) go away quickly. But when these feelings do not go away or get worse, a woman may have postpartum depression or anxiety. This is a serious condition that needs to be addressed by a health care provider or counselor/therapist.

If you think you might have postpartum depression, you’re not alone. During the first few weeks after birth you may feel weepy, exhausted or tense. But generally you are happy.

If those sad feelings don’t go away and you have no energy to care for your self or your baby, or you feel so anxious that you cannot relax and enjoy your new baby, you may have postpartum depression or PPD.

PPD is a combination of adjustments to pregnancy and childbirth, both physical and emotional. None of them are the mother’s fault. And any woman regardless of race, income, culture, age, or education can get PPD.

Some Risk Factors:

- Previous depressions
- Family history of depression
- Traumatic birth experience
- Isolation
- Chronic sleep deprivation

How can I make it go away?

For mild PPD it helps to:

- Get as much sleep as you can.
- Turn to others for help: friends, family or paid help.
- Accept not being able to do everything you used to do.
- Accept the swing of feelings as normal.
- Find time just for yourself.
- Talk about what is going on with a friend

Or a support group.

- Avoid being alone.
- Get fresh air and exercise
- Eat a healthy diet through small, frequent meals.

For severe depression:
Get help. Talk to your doctor.

Call:

PEP (Postpartum Education for Parents)
– 805-564-3888
CALM – 805-965-2376
A Child’s Path – 805-614-9535
Public Health – 805-346-8436
Or click www.welcomeverybaby.org or
www.bienvenidobebe.org for more information.

Untreated PPD can interfere with a mother’s ability to connect with her baby and promote a healthy attachment.

Your baby’s healthy development depends greatly on your ability to bond with him or her. Spending lots of quality time with your baby and responding appropriately to his or her needs makes him/her feel safe and comfortable. Through a healthy attachment, you are ensuring your infant will grow up emotionally and intellectually healthy.



Santa Barbara County (North): 805.922.5459 (South): 805.898.2229 www.welcomeverybaby.org