



# POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

Similar to Depression, Postpartum Depression can look different for different people. However, Postpartum Depression is diagnosed when episodes of depression start anytime during pregnancy, or after the birth of a child for up to 6 months.

## **Common symptoms include:**

- Sad or low mood
- Difficulty bonding with the baby
- Withdrawal from family and friends
- Thoughts of self-harm or of harming the baby
- Sleep and appetite problems
- Feelings of worthlessness, guilt, and/or shame
- Reduced interest and pleasure in activities that used to be enjoyable
- Severe anxiety or panic attacks
- Thoughts about being a bad parent

Postpartum Depression can be caused by a variety of biological, psychological, and environmental factors.

## **Who can have Postpartum Depression?**

While Postpartum Depression is most commonly experienced by birthing mothers, it is important to know that any new parent can be affected. This includes mothers, fathers, as well as parents who adopt. Due to the extreme life, relationship, sleep, nutrition and hormonal changes when first having a child, postpartum can affect anyone experiencing these changes.



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## **Should I be concerned?**

Postpartum Depression can be very serious when it starts to affect the quality of life of the parent and child. Being a new parent can be difficult and overwhelming enough without the added challenges of depression. If you notice any of the symptoms above in a loved one or family member which is affecting the person's ability to perform daily activities, it may be time to seek professional support.

## **How can I help?**

Ask the person how long they have felt this way. Try to find out what they have been thinking about; if you see immediate harm to themselves or to their child, professional support should be involved as soon as possible. You can also offer to help out around the house in any way you can and try to reassure the person that they are doing the best they can as a new parent.

## **Resources**

- [www.postpartum.net](http://www.postpartum.net)
- 1-800-944-4773
- <https://www.mooddisorders.ca>
- <http://www.amhs-kfla.ca>
- Distress Line (Kingston) – 613-544-1771
- <https://cmha.ca/documents/postpartum-depression>