

NEW MOTHER FACT SHEET

Baby Blues/Postpartum Blues

The body's response to distress that may occur naturally after childbirth



Signs

- Tearfulness
- Irritability
- Mood swings
- Loss of appetite
- Anxiety
- Low self-esteem
- Impatience
- Decreased concentration
- Difficulty sleeping
- Anger
- Fear



What To Know

- The "baby blues" may occur two to three days after delivery and usually disappear within one to two weeks.
- The "baby blues" is the body's response to stress; it is not a mental disorder.
- About 70 percent of postpartum mothers experience some symptoms of the "baby blues."
- Researchers are not sure of the exact cause. Some think the sudden drop in hormones after childbirth can contribute to this occurrence.
- Other possible causes include chronic lack of sleep, and a lack of support and/or isolation.

What To Do

- Care for yourself by getting adequate rest.
- Nap when your baby naps.
- Ask a friend or relative to assist you for at least a few hours a day during the first two weeks.
- Eat regular balanced meals.
- Call a friend or relative for support.
- Continue prenatal vitamins until your postpartum check-up with your health-care provider.
- Maintain a healthy relationship with your partner.
- Maintain a good sense of humor.
- Visit and share your feelings with other parents.
- Exercise as soon as your health-care provider says it is okay.
- Arrange for child care so you may get out of the house, even if it is just for a short walk.



When To Call Your Health-Care Provider

- If symptoms continue or worsen after two weeks.
- If you experience more negative thoughts than positive.
- Excessive concern or lack of concern for your baby.

If You Experience Any of the Following Episodes, Call 911:

- Thoughts of harming yourself or your baby.
- Confusion.
- Hallucinations or delusions.

