



Postpartum Depression

It's normal to feel happy, sad, or tired after having a baby. These mood swings are caused by changing hormone levels. They tend to go away in about a week. **Postpartum depression** is a mood disorder. It causes strong feelings of sadness that don't go away. Postpartum depression can make it hard for a woman to care for herself and her baby.

Risk Factors

Postpartum depression can affect any woman, but some women are more at risk than others. Risk factors include:

- Having felt depressed before
- A recent stressful life event such as job loss or death of a loved one
- Health problems of mother/baby due to childbirth
- Mixed feelings about the pregnancy
- Not having the support of spouse or partner
- Alcohol or drug abuse

Symptoms

Symptoms of postpartum depression include:

- Feeling sad or empty
- Worrying or feeling overly anxious
- Sleeping/eating too much or too little
- Having trouble bonding with baby
- Withdrawing from family/friends
- Thinking about hurting self or baby



Treatment

Postpartum depression can be treated. Talk to your doctor about:

- **Counseling or “talk therapy”.** This means talking to a mental health professional. It can help you change the way you think and work through problems.
- **Medications.** Taking medication can improve mood, but may take a few weeks to work.

These treatments can be used alone or together.

For information in your language or in another format,
call L.A. Care at **1-888-839-9909** or TTY **711**