

Wondering why your new baby is not making you happy?

Having a baby is a major life event and can cause worry, tiredness and sadness. Usually these feelings don't last long, but if they persist you may be suffering from depression. For more information, read on.

What you should know

- Depression following childbirth is very common. It affects 1 in 6 women who have given birth. Depression is an illness characterized by persistent sadness and a loss of interest in activities that you normally enjoy, accompanied by an inability to carry out daily activities, for at least two weeks.
- In addition, people with depression normally have several of the following: a loss of energy; a change in appetite; sleeping more or less; anxiety; reduced concentration; indecisiveness; restlessness; feelings of worthlessness, guilt, or hopelessness; and thoughts of self-harm or suicide.
- Symptoms of depression after childbirth also include: a feeling of being overwhelmed; persistent crying for no apparent reason; lack of bonding with your baby; and doubt about being able to care for yourself and your baby.
- Depression after childbirth can be treated with professional help. Talking treatments and medicines can help. Some medicines can be taken safely while breastfeeding.
- Without treatment, depression following childbirth can last for months or even years. It can affect your health and the development of your baby.



REMEMBER:
Depression after childbirth is very common. If you think you may be affected, seek help.

What you can do if you think you have depression

- Discuss your feelings with people close to you and ask them for support. They might be able to help you look after the baby when you need some time to yourself or to rest.
- Stay connected by spending time with family and friends.
- Get out in the open air when you can. In safe environments, taking your baby for a walk is good for both of you.
- Talk with other mothers who may have advice or be able to share experiences.
- Talk to your health-care provider. He or she can help you find the treatment that is most appropriate to your situation.
- If you have thoughts of harming yourself or your baby, seek help immediately.