



MAINE STATEWIDE CRISIS HOTLINE

1-888-568-1112

OTHER RESOURCES:

www.postpartum.net

Postpartum Support International
1-800-944-4PPD

www.womensmentalhealth.org

MGH Center for Women's Mental
Health

www.mededppd.org

NIMH supported educational website
about PPD

www.ppdsupportpage.com

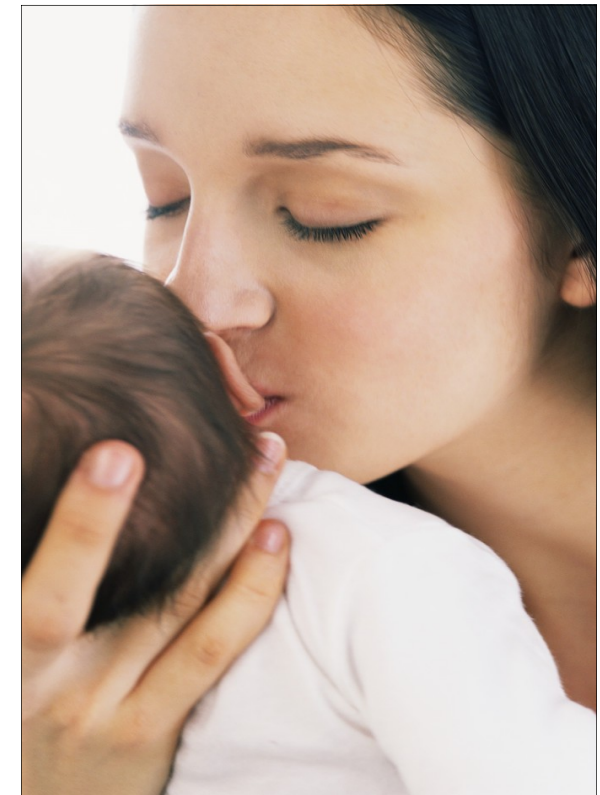
Online PPD Support Group

This pamphlet was created as part of the Maine
Association of Psychiatric Physicians (MAPP)
Postpartum Depression Project (PPD Project)
For more information about PPD or the Project
go to www.mainepsych.org



POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION:

Facts all women should know



What Can You Do?

Accept help from family and friends

Focus on taking care of yourself too—eat well,
try to get some exercise, give yourself time to
do something that nurtures you.

Talk to a mental health professional and take
medication as prescribed

Seek out a support group

Avoid becoming isolated; talk to people about
your feelings

Watch out for overly high expectations for your-
self—society has taught women that having a
baby should be a blissful time and that they
should be able to care for a baby and still do
many other things.. Just focus on taking care of
you and your baby and do it with as much help
as possible during this time.

Remember.....

PPD is not your fault; it is an illness

You are not alone; 1 in 8 women develop PPD

**There is help ; if you recognize the signs and
ask for it**

You will get better; treatment is very effective

What is Perinatal Depression?

- Postpartum depression is a common illness
- It is the most common complication of child birth.
- It affects 1 out of 8 women
- Depression during pregnancy is equally as common.
- Depression during both of these times is collectively called perinatal depression
- Most often it is undiagnosed
- When untreated, it has serious consequences for mother and baby

What about the Baby Blues?

- A normal reaction that begins within the first few days after delivery.
- May include sadness, anxiety, trouble concentrating, difficulty sleeping, worrying and feeling more emotional.
- Does not require treatment
- Resolves within 1-2 weeks.
- If this persists or worsens, may be something more serious, so talk to your doctor or health care provider



What is Postpartum Depression (PPD)?

- Postpartum depression can occur at any time within the first year after delivery.
- Often women suffer in silence because they do not recognize that they have PPD.
- They may feel ashamed of their feelings of depression.
- PPD is not the fault of the woman, a weakness, or a character flaw.
- It is a medical illness that requires treatment and there are very effective treatments available.
- Here are some of the signs of postpartum depression:
 1. Anxiety, irritability or restlessness
 2. Difficulty sleeping even when there is opportunity, or wanting to sleep all the time
 3. Eating too much or too little
 4. Having trouble with concentration and decision making
 5. Frequent crying and feelings of sadness
 6. Feelings of hopelessness and helplessness,
 7. Withdrawal from friends and family
 8. Lack of motivation or energy to do things
 9. Feelings of inadequacy and guilt
 10. Loss of pleasure or interest (sometimes in the baby causing poor bonding)
 11. Obsessional thoughts about the baby, sometimes worries about the baby's welfare but unwelcome thoughts about harming the baby are also common
 12. Feeling like life isn't worth living or having suicidal thoughts



What is Postpartum Psychosis?

- Less common and more severe illness
- Usually begins within a few days after delivery
- Usually Involves agitation, severe confusion, inability to sleep, distrust of others, hearing voices or seeing things that aren't there, inability to eat, strange thoughts or beliefs that include thoughts of harming themselves or their babies care.
- Requires emergency treatment

How is Perinatal Depression Treated?

- First seek professional help
- The 2 main types of treatment are talk therapy and medication
- For moderate to severe depression medication is often needed along with talk therapy
- Discussing the risks and benefits of antidepressant medication during pregnancy and breastfeeding is an important part of individualized treatment
- Significant risks of untreated depression to mothers and babies should also be discussed
- Your health care provider can also refer you to a mental health professional who has experience in dealing with PPD.