

The Baby Blues and You

You're pregnant or just had a baby and you feel like it should be the best time of your life, but inside you're unhappy.

You may have the baby blues or post-partum depression.

Mothers experiencing post-partum depression often:

- ◆ Feel depressed or moody.
- ◆ Have trouble sleeping.
- ◆ Experience loss of appetite.
- ◆ Cry a lot.
- ◆ Have been treated for depression in the past.



If you have the baby blues, you're not alone! Many mothers feel sad and drained after the birth of a baby. In fact, depression is one of the most common complications during and after pregnancy in the United States.

If depression or sadness sticks around, keeps coming back, or becomes overwhelming, it's not only a problem for you—it can cause serious harm to your baby.

Sad mothers often have trouble responding to their babies in healthy ways, simply because they feel so bad. Infants of depressed mothers may develop "depressed brains" and become sad children. When moms are depressed during the first six months of a baby's life, attachment—or bonding—becomes more difficult. Babies with insecure attachments can experience trouble throughout childhood, including behavior problems, difficulty concentrating, frequent accidents, and trouble trusting and loving others.



If you are feeling down, don't wait. Talk to your doctor about it and ask for help.

In addition, take steps to:

- ◆ Ask for support from your partner during and after your pregnancy.
- ◆ Seek out positive relationships with your family and friends for the days when you need them.

Remember that taking care of yourself is important to you and your baby, so:

- ◆ Eat well.
- ◆ Exercise.
- ◆ Limit stress in your daily life.
- ◆ Take care of yourself.