

# Is it Baby Blues or Postpartum Mood Disorder?

	<b>Baby Blues</b>	<b>Postpartum Mood Disorders: Depression/Anxiety/OCD</b>
<b>How Often</b>	80% of new moms.	Up to 20% of new mothers develop postpartum mood disorders.
<b>When</b>	Usually between birth and four weeks.	Usually between birth and one year after childbirth.
<b>Cause</b>	Drop in hormone levels post-delivery heightened by being overly tired, going back to work, feeling inadequate as a mom, feeling trapped/isolated and problems bonding with the baby.	This is a medical problem. The dramatic shift in hormones can leave new moms feeling fatigued, anxious, and overwhelmed. You'll also experience a change in blood pressure, blood volume, and in your immune system. These physical changes and new lifestyle stressors can bring on PPMDs, and women with a personal or family history of a mental health disorder are at a higher risk
<b>Symptoms</b>	Mood swings, anxiety, irritability, insomnia, crying, nervousness and general unhappiness.	Insomnia or sleeping too much, loss of appetite or overeating, nausea, lack of interest in activities, inability to concentrate, severe mood swings, lethargy or hyperactivity, feelings of helplessness, anxiety and panic attacks, obsessiveness, disorientation and confusion, excessive crying, intrusive/repeating thoughts, hopelessness or lack of control, inability to care for yourself or baby, loss of touch with reality.

<b>Solution</b>	After several weeks, a routine is established, your hormone levels stabilize and the baby blues usually disappear.	You need to see a medical professional and work with him/her to tailor a treatment plan specifically for you.
<b>How Dad Can Help</b>	Ask him to help lighten your load (then take the help you're offered!). Ask him to listen and encourage you to talk about your frustrations. Let him watch the baby so you have time on your own to rest or recharge. Make sure he knows who to call if symptoms seem to worsen.	Dad's your first line of defense in recognizing the symptoms are lasting longer than they should. He needs to know it's OK to be worried about you and to call your obstetrician/mental health provider. If you discuss this before the birth, it will be easier for him to take action if needed. He can also reach out to family and friends to help take care of the baby while you tackle this issue together and accompany you to your doctor/therapist appointments.
<b>What Moms Say</b>	<p>"Sometimes I would just cry. You've gone through something mentally, physically. It lasted about two weeks, and then I was just crazy (laughs)."</p> <p>"A new mom shared that the first day her husband went back to work she had the baby blues, and when he came home, she was just sobbing and he said, 'Wait right there.' And he ran upstairs and got the Crash Course for Dads-to-Be book and went to the PPD page and said, 'Do you...? No. Do you...? No. Do you...? Yes. OK—you have the baby blues. You may now continue crying.'"</p>	"It was about six weeks long for me and the doctor said it was depression. She said, 'I'm not concerned about your safety, but you're depressed.' And I think those words were what I had to hear. I just wasn't myself. It was all surrounding breastfeeding. It was the guilt of being a failure. Logically, my husband would say, 'You do what you can, but if you just need to quit, quit. It's OK.' I just couldn't get out of bed. I was crying. Also, my husband didn't have a job, so there was a lot of outside stress. I felt like the one thing I could control was breastfeeding and I couldn't control that."

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