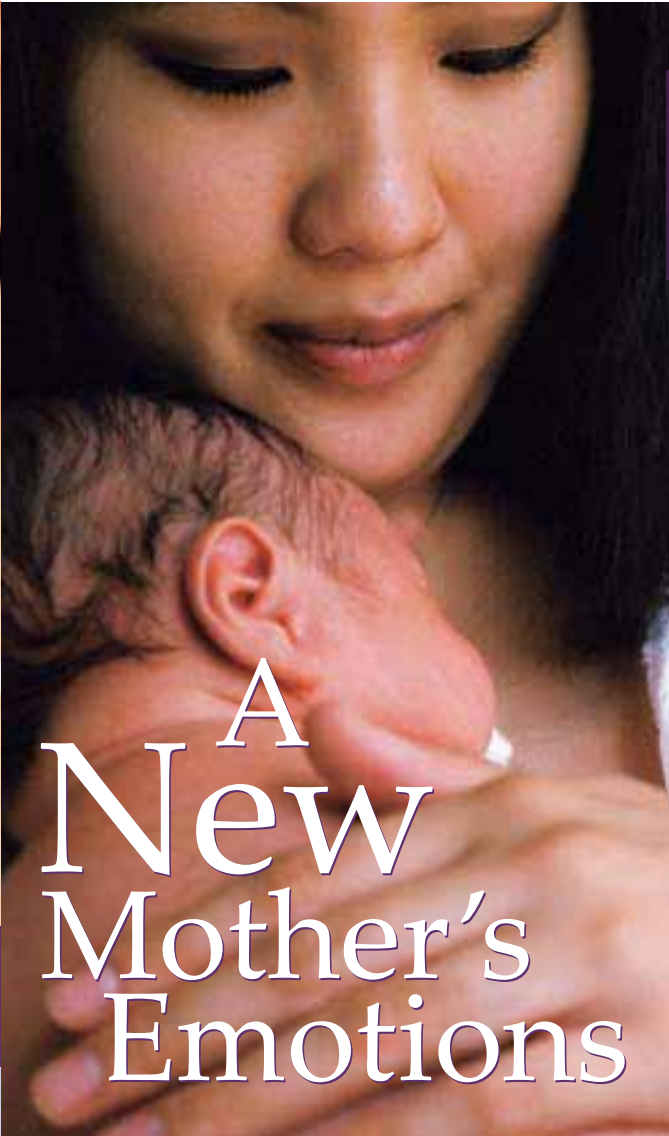


You  
are not  
alone

Call Health Connection at:  
1-800-361-5653

- For more information
- Links to community
- Home visiting support
- Support groups



A  
New  
Mother's  
Emotions

  
**York Region**

Community and Health Services  
Health Connection  
1-800-361-5653  
TTY 1-866-252-9933

  
WINDSOR - ESSEX COUNTY  
HEALTH UNIT  
Unité sanitaire  
de Windsor comté d'Essex  
Adapted with permission  
4154 07 2010

## Postpartum Mood Disorder


It can affect:

- Your physical health
- Your emotions
- Your actions
- Your relationships
- Your baby

It can happen to any  
family with a baby

It is not your fault

It is treatable



If you know  
someone who  
is living with a  
mood disorder  
you can  
help by:

- Being patient
- Listening
- Providing breaks
- Supporting decisions  
to seek help
- Watching for signs of  
medical emergency
- Providing emotional  
support by letting her  
know that her concerns  
are real and that you  
will be there

## Facts

## Symptoms (May include some or all of the following)

## Risk Factors

## What Can Moms Do?

### Baby Blues

Affects 50 per cent to 80 per cent of new moms

Occurs within the first three to five days after birth

Goes away within one to two weeks

- Crying
- Feeling sad
- Feeling frustrated
- Feeling tired
- Difficulty concentrating
- Difficulty sleeping

### Postpartum Depression

Affects 10 per cent to 15 per cent of new moms

May start suddenly or slowly

Can occur any time within the first year after the birth of your baby or during pregnancy

- Crying, irritability
- Exhaustion
- Appetite changes
- Feelings of doubt about parenting
- Guilt
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Having no feelings for your baby
- Loss of interest in usual activities

### Postpartum Anxiety

Begins the same as Postpartum Depression

- Panic attacks, extreme anxiety
- Feelings of dread
- Racing thoughts, difficulty sleeping
- Feel like there is a lump in your throat
- Fear of being alone with the baby
- Frequent concerns about your health or your baby's health

### Postpartum Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder

Begins the same as Postpartum Depression

- Having repeated scary thoughts about baby ("seeing" baby drown, "seeing" baby fall down stairs)


### Postpartum Psychosis

Rare - Occurs in one to two per 1,000 births

Rapid onset – Usually three to six days after birth

**Requires emergency treatment**

- Hallucinations (hearing or seeing things)
- Paranoia (highly suspicious)
- Difficulty sleeping
- Strange behaviour

- 
- Previous postpartum mood disorder
  - History of severe premenstrual syndrome (PMS)
  - Unplanned pregnancy
  - Previous miscarriage(s) or infertility
  - Depression or anxiety during pregnancy
  - Previous mental health issue
  - Family history of postpartum mood disorder or mental health issue
  - Unexpected or disappointing birth experience
  - High expectations of birth and motherhood
  - Baby with special needs
  - Fussy baby
  - Tendency to worry
  - Difficulty asking for help
  - Stressful life events
  - Lack of help or support
  - Abrupt weaning

*Get help!* Talk to someone about how you are feeling. Delaying treatment can delay recovery.

*Take care of yourself.* Sleep when baby sleeps, eat right and get some exercise.

*Take breaks.* Take time to be by yourself. Take a bath, read a magazine, go for a walk.

*Ask for support.* It is okay to have help taking care of your baby and yourself. Choose someone you can talk to, who is patient and caring.

*Get counselling.* There are many professionals who can help you to talk through your feelings.

*Consider medication.* Antidepressants are not addictive. Talk to your doctor about what is right for you. You can continue to breastfeed while taking certain medications.

*Delay major decisions.* Wait until you are feeling better so you can concentrate and think through problems.

*Be patient.* It takes time for recovery. Remember, there is hope.

*You will get better.*