

HEALTH TIPS

Make Health Happen

Postpartum depression

THE BIRTH OF A BABY CAN BE A HAPPY TIME. BUT FOR SOME MOTHERS, CHILDBIRTH IS FOLLOWED BY A PERIOD OF SADNESS OR DEPRESSION.

The baby blues

Some new mothers get the baby blues. They feel sad, sensitive, stressed out or nervous during the first few weeks after delivery. These feelings go away in a few weeks.

What is postpartum depression?

What happens when the baby blues don't go away or get worse? Some new mothers become depressed after giving birth. This is called postpartum depression. It lasts more than two weeks and can happen anytime during the first year after childbirth.

How will I know if I have postpartum depression?

Ask yourself these questions:

- Do I feel sad most of the time?
- Do I have low energy?
- Do I sleep too much or too little?
- Do I eat too much or too little?
- Do I have trouble remembering things?
- Do I have aches or pains for no reason?
- Do I worry too much about my baby?
- Do I think I'm not a good mother most of the time?

- Do I feel like I might hurt myself or my baby?
- Do I cry most of the time?
- Do I have little interest in my baby, family or friends?
- Do I feel guilty, worthless or hopeless?

You should call your doctor if you answered "yes" to any of these questions.

Getting the help I need

If I think I have postpartum depression, I will:

- Make an appointment with my doctor.
- Share my depression signs with my doctor and ask to be screened for depression.
- Ask my doctor to help me choose a safe treatment that works.
- Go to the emergency room right away if I feel like hurting myself or my baby.

Important things for me to know

- It is hard to take care of my baby when I am depressed.
- Early treatment can help me feel better.
- Most women recover from postpartum depression when they receive the help they need.

National Institute of Mental Health website: *Women and Depression: Discovering Hope*, (2011): nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/women-and-depression-discovering-hope/index.shtml. (Accessed June 9, 2014.)



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Helpful phone numbers for UniCare Health Plan of West Virginia, Inc. only

Customer Care Center: 1-800-782-0095 (TTY 1-866-378-1634)

MedCall: 1-888-850-1108 (TTY 1-800-368-4424)

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