

## How to help yourself:

- Ask for help and support from relatives, friends or health professionals.
- Be kind to yourself, your needs are important too.
- Take one day at a time.
- Talk about how you feel.
- Accept there will be bad days - don't blame yourself.
- Eat a healthy diet.
- Rest as much as possible.



## Fathers can be depressed too:

Although postnatal depression is usually associated with new mothers, current research suggests 1 in 25 new fathers are affected.

The pressures of fatherhood with increased responsibility, an altered lifestyle, financial uncertainties, lack of sleep and a change in relationship with their partner, can all contribute to feelings of depression. Occasionally this depression can even start during the pregnancy or when all the attention is focused on the new mother leaving men feeling 'left out'. Symptoms are similar to those found in women but sometimes men can become more hostile in attitude.



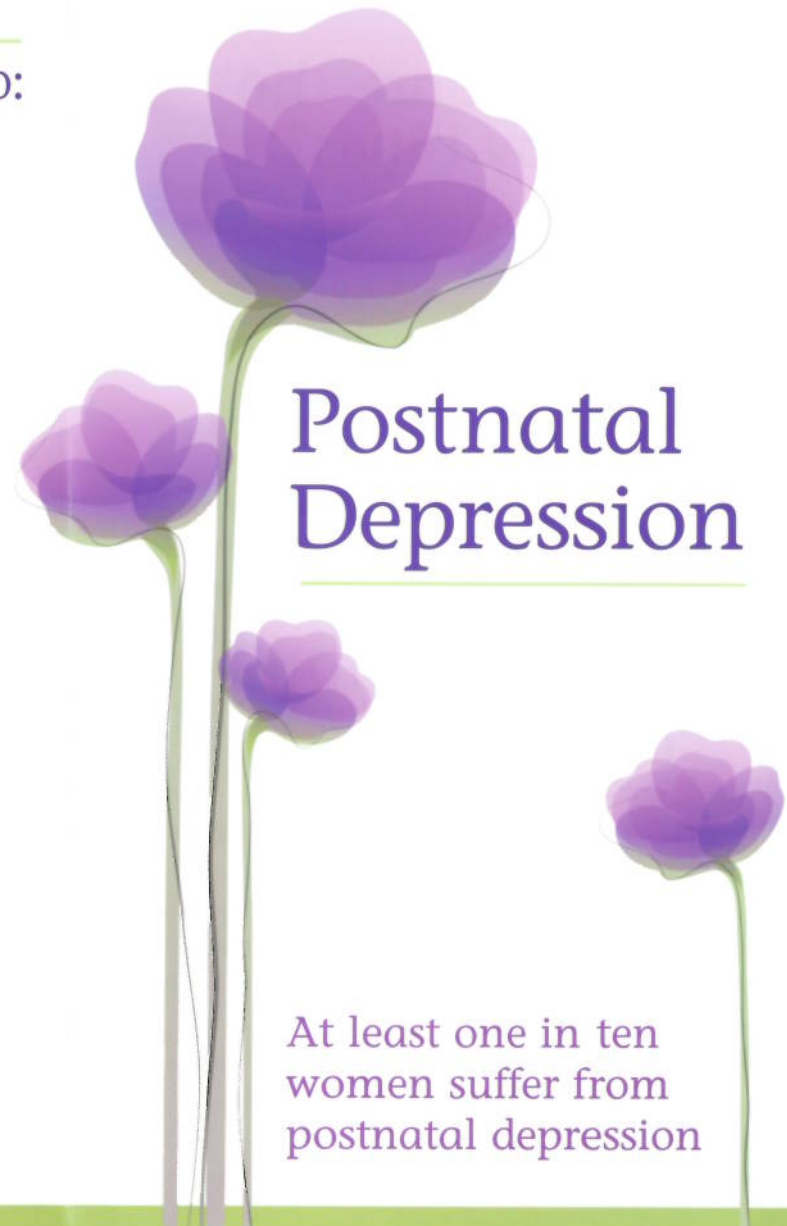
### Self-help tips for Dads

- Talk about how you feel to family and friends.
- Allow time for yourself, away from work and family.
- Try to maintain some hobbies or social events.
- Ask for help and support, you're not alone.

#### For further information and support contact:

- NHS Choices  
[www.nhs.uk/conditions/postnataldepression](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/postnataldepression)
- N.C.T. Tel: 0300 330 0700  
[www.nct.org.uk](http://www.nct.org.uk)
- Association for Postnatal Illness Tel: 0207 386 0868  
[www.apni.org](http://www.apni.org)
- Mind Info Line Tel: 0300 123 3393  
[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
- The Royal College of Psychiatrists Tel: 020 7235 2351  
[www.rcpsych.ac.uk](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk)

Your Health Visitor's name and telephone number



## Postnatal Depression

At least one in ten women suffer from postnatal depression

*Remember postnatal depression is a common experience and with help, time and support you will recover.*

**You're not alone**

## What are the baby blues?

- Postnatal depression should not be confused with the baby blues.
- The majority of women experience mood swings during the first few days after having a baby and are often tearful.
- Sleeping problems and appetite changes can also occur.
- The baby blues only last a few days.
- If these symptoms do not disappear it may be that you are developing postnatal depression.

## What is postnatal depression?

Postnatal depression is a depressive illness. The birth of a new baby can be stressful for both parents with lifestyle changes and demands, together with feelings of guilt as you are expected to be happy. Try to understand that having postnatal depression does not mean you do not love or care for your baby.

- Postnatal depression is a clinical depression occurring anytime during the first year following birth.
- If left untreated it can get worse and take longer for you to recover.
- Be reassured there are many treatments available and it should be a temporary condition.
- Try the self-help suggestions, if this is not enough then seek advice from your GP or health visitor.

## Symptoms could include:

- Feeling sad and weepy.
- Anxiety and irritability.
- Feeling tired all the time.
- Finding no enjoyment in life.
- Feeling unable to cope.
- Not wanting to be with others.
- Feeling unlovable and worthless.
- No interest in sex.
- Not being able to concentrate, make decisions or forgetting things.
- Having no energy or enthusiasm.
- Decrease or increase in appetite.
- Struggling to do everyday simple tasks.



## Is it my fault?

**NO.** There are many stresses involved in having and caring for a newborn baby.

Consider the demands of parenthood:

- Full-time responsibility for baby.
- Trying to be a perfect mother.
- Role change.
- Feeling undervalued.
- Lack of time for oneself.
- Financial difficulties.
- Lack of adult company and isolation.
- 24 hour duty.
- Being pulled in different directions.
- Sleeplessness.
- Having no-one to listen to you.
- Unfulfilled expectations of motherhood.

