



## What is Depression?

Depression is more than just feeling “blue” or “down in the dumps” for a few days. It’s a serious illness that involves the brain. With depression, sad, anxious, or “empty” feelings don’t go away and they interfere with day-to-day life and routines. These feelings can be mild to severe. The good news is that most people with depression get better with treatment.

## How common is depression during and after pregnancy?

Depression is a common problem during and after pregnancy. About 13 percent of pregnant women and new mothers have depression.

## How do I know if I have depression?

When you are pregnant or after you have a baby, you may be depressed and not know it. There are some normal changes during and after pregnancy that can cause symptoms similar to those of depression. If you believe you may have had any of the following symptoms of depression or if you experience them at any time in the future, please contact your physician.

- Feeling restless or moody
- Feeling sad, hopeless, and overwhelmed
- Crying a lot
- Having no energy or motivation
- Eating too much or too little
- Sleeping too much or too little
- Having trouble focusing or making decisions
- Having memory problems
- Feeling worthless and guilty
- Losing interest or pleasure in activities you used to enjoy
- Withdrawing from friends and family
- Having headaches, aches and pains, or stomach problems that don’t go away

Your obstetrician can help you figure out if your symptoms are caused by depression or something else and provide you with the support you need.

Call your doctor’s office for referrals to psychiatrists, therapists or support services.

Do not discontinue your medications if you are already under treatment without discussing with a doctor.

Women with postpartum depression need not feel alone. They may find useful information on the web sites of the **National Women’s Health Information Center** ([www.4women.gov](http://www.4women.gov)) and **Postpartum Support International** ([www.postpartum.net](http://www.postpartum.net)) and from groups such as **Depression after Delivery** ([www.depressionafterdelivery.com](http://www.depressionafterdelivery.com)).

Helpline 855-631-0001