

Do you know the #1 complication of pregnancy and childbirth?

ANXIETY and DEPRESSION

These illnesses affect up to 1 in 5 women during pregnancy or the first year postpartum. They are caused by changes in biology, psychology, hormones, and environment.

You are not alone. You are not to blame. With help, you will be well.

WOMEN EXPERIENCING THESE ILLNESSES SAY:

I'm supposed to be happy...why do I feel so sad?
I worry all the time.
Why am I such a failure?
I feel like the worst mother in the world.
Everything would be better if I got a good night's sleep.
I'm having thoughts that are scaring me.
Why can't I 'snap out of it'?
I want to run away.

SIGNS and SYMPTOMS

Overwhelmed
Anxious
Angry
Sad
Guilty
Irritable
Hopeless
Exhausted but can't sleep

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Postpartum Support Virginia helps new and expectant mothers and their families overcome perinatal mood and anxiety disorders by providing **FREE** support, information, and resources.

Visit Postpartum Support Virginia's website at www.postpartumva.org to find:

- *support volunteers and support groups*
- *mental health professionals*
- *self-help and coping techniques*
- *additional resources*

Postpartum Support Virginia 
Hope and help for new mothers

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What To Expect...When You Arrive Home



- Your baby is a unique individual, born with a unique temperament. It may take a few days – or even a few weeks – to understand what your baby’s different noises and cries mean. Babies don’t arrive with an owner’s manual, nor do they tell time. Just because all the books say babies eat every 3 hours doesn’t mean YOUR baby will eat every 3 hours.
- The first few weeks can be a great deal of work. Life for a newborn consists of eating, digesting, sleeping, and crying. This cycle repeats 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. New parents often find themselves exhausted and overwhelmed, asking “How did this little baby change our life so much?”
- This intense period of hands-on parenting can cause even the most competent and confident parents to question their parenting skills. Adults who once were able to keep the house spotless, juggle competing priorities, and stay ahead of chores can find themselves drowning in dirty dishes, dirty laundry, and a dirty house. This is completely normal. Newborn babies need lots of love and holding. The dishes will wait.

Most new mothers (approximately 85%) will experience mood swings, lack of concentration, tearfulness, irritability and anxiety during the first few weeks.

These feelings are caused by a major lifestyle change and by changes in hormone levels.

Sometimes called the "baby blues," this is the normal adjustment period. These symptoms usually disappear in about three weeks.

If these symptoms do not resolve by themselves – or if they worsen – you could be experiencing postpartum depression or anxiety.

Please turn over for more information, including where to go for help.