

# Navigating Postpartum Depression



- 1 in 7 women experience postpartum depression after giving birth.
- Symptoms include strong feelings of sadness, worry, and/or tiredness that make it hard for the mother to look after herself and her baby.
- Usually starts 1-3 weeks after child birth but may occur up to a year later.
- Postpartum depression is the most common complication of childbirth but only 15% of women receive treatment for it.

## RISK FACTORS

- Prior history of depression, including during pregnancy
- First pregnancy or multiple pregnancy
- Lack of social support, isolation, or marital challenges
- Having a baby with special needs or a baby that cries a lot

## STRATEGIES TO HELP PREVENT IT

- Be realistic - expect some good days and some bad days
- Try to get rest when you can
- Try to exercise within reason e.g. take a short walk
- Stay connected to family and friends
- Ask for help!

## WHEN SHOULD I SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP?

- Symptoms last more than 2 weeks
- Feelings of extreme anxiety, fear, and/or panic that last most of the day
- Cannot function normally or cope with everyday situations
- Thoughts of harming yourself or your baby

## CAN POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION BE TREATED?

- Yes! Postpartum depression is treatable with antidepressants and psychotherapy
- Antidepressants are safe to use even while breastfeeding

If you have any questions about postpartum depression or know someone who may be struggling, please reach out to your healthcare provider or ACCESS for more information.

