

## BIRTHING NATURALLY

# Postpartum Depression

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The first nine months after your baby is born are a time of heightened risk for thyroid dysfunctions. As your body returns to pre-pregnancy hormone levels, you will need to be sure you get plenty of rest and continue your excellent nutrition. If you think you may be experiencing depression, it is important that you seek help immediately. Your health, and the health of your baby depend on your body's ability to return to normal functioning. Though anyone can experience postpartum depression, women who have a previous or family history of depression are at greater risk. Other women are at higher risk because of major life changes, such as a new job, moving to a new home or death in the family. Women who do not have a strong social support are also at increased risk.

### Sources of Support

How have you supported yourself during times of stress or change in the past?

What will be your strengths as a parent?

How has your partner successfully provided self-support during times of stress/change in the past?

What will be your partner's strengths as a parent?

What support do you want from your partner?

What support do you want from your family?

What support can you get from your community?

Take a few minutes to list the people in your life who are sources of support for you. This may be friends, relatives or members of a social organization. Include in your list what type of support each person can give such as helping with laundry or preparing meals, or just listening as you share your frustrations or concerns.

### BABY BLUES

The "baby blues" is a normal part of the postpartum experience. The rapid changes in your body may make you feel sad, find yourself crying for no reason, feeling as if you are unfit as a mother or changing your mind about having a baby. These feelings may come and go, but they should pass. If they last longer than two weeks, talk to your midwife about Postpartum Depression.

### POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

Postpartum Depression should be considered if the normal "baby blues" last longer than two weeks. You should also seek help if you experience feelings of apathy or anger at your baby, stop caring for the physical needs of you or your baby, can not sleep even though you are tired, have no appetite or lose your desire for social contact.