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A Guide to postnatal depression in Fathers.
Do Fathers experience postnatal depression?

Depression can also be experienced by fathers following the birth of their child.

The rates in fathers vary but it can affect up to 1 in 10 fathers.

First time fathers are particular prone to depression.

The risk is higher in fathers who are young, unemployed or have strained relationships with their partner.

If the mother is depressed the risk of depression in fathers is higher.

What are the signs and symptoms?

Irritability

Increased anxiety

Lack of bonding or involvement with your baby

Misuse of alcohol and illegal substances

Low Self esteem

Loss of interest in things and activities that were once pleasurable

Persistent tiredness and sleep disturbances

Changes in appetite

Anger & aggression

Useful resources for fathers and mothers.

Search the websites below for post-natal depression.

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk

Mind: www.mind.org.uk Telephone 0300 1233393

PANDAS Pre & post-natal support depression, advice & support.

www.pandasfoundation.org.uk 08432898401

Fathers Reaching out:

www.fathersreachingout.com

The Father Institute

www.fatherhoodinstitute.org
What to do if you think you have postnatal depression:

Postnatal depression can be lonely, distressing and frightening, but there is help available.

As long as it’s recognised and addressed, postnatal depression is temporary and you can recover from it.

The condition is unlikely to get better by itself quickly and it could impact on the care of the baby.

- It is important to seek help—you can contact your GP or Health Visitor
- Help may include:
  - Self-help advice
  - Talking therapies, such as cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT)
  - Anti-depressant medication

You can also get some more information from:

- The Fatherhood Institute:
  - www.fatherhoodinstitute.org
- Fathers Reaching Out:
  - www.fathersreachingout.com

Triggers of Postnatal depression!

The cause of postnatal depression in fathers is unclear; it can be the result of a combination of factors, such as:

- The emotional and stressful events of having a baby
- Financial pressures and change in lifestyle
- Changes in relationship with partner
- Lack of sleep
- Increased workload at home
- The pressure of balancing various new demands
- History of depression, alcohol and substance misuse.
Self help measures to improve emotional well-being.

Don’t try and be “super dad,” avoid extra challenges.

Take regular gentle exercise.

Recognise that you may sometimes feel down or low about being a parent.

Talk to your partner, family and friends about how you are feeling.

Focus on the enjoyable aspects of parenting.

Maintain important hobbies or social events.

Avoid negative coping strategies, such as drinking too much, working too hard and staying away from home.

Contact local support groups, such as Fathers’ groups or national helplines for advice and support.

Don’t despair. Postnatal depression can affect anyone. You’re not to blame.

How postnatal depression can affect you!

- Lack of confidence
- Lack of enjoyment
- Loss of sex drive
- Relationship difficulties

Can contribute to depression in partner

Can lead to self neglect and engagement in unhealthy behaviours—excessive smoking, drinking, gambling, drug-use etc

Work/financial problems

How postnatal depression can affect your baby.

- Disturbed sleep patterns
- Feeding difficulties
- Difficulties in settling
- Prolonged crying
- Baby not content on their own
- Difficulty in bonding with your baby
- Emotional, behavioural and speech problems in childhood.