

Baby blues and psychological well-being



In the days following childbirth, some mothers experience mood swings, feel sad, and sometimes anxious. How about you? This fact sheet explains what the “baby blues” are and what can help you get through this time.

What are baby blues?

In the days following childbirth, your emotions may be jumbled or confused. Many mothers feel depressed or on edge. These feelings are called the “baby blues”.

What are the symptoms of baby blues?

The main symptoms are:

- loss of appetite
- difficulty sleeping
- fatigue
- irritability or mood swings
- crying
- sadness
- anxiety

It’s normal to have these kinds of reactions. It happens to the vast majority of new mothers, and you shouldn’t feel guilty about it.

Fatigue, exhaustion, and hormonal upheaval related to childbirth are the underlying cause of baby blues.

Can it get worse?

In most cases, the symptoms go away on their own, but if your symptoms last longer than two weeks, or if you’re not interested in your baby, postnatal (or postpartum) depression may develop.

If you’re concerned, consult a health professional (nurse, doctor, or psychologist). The sooner you ask for help, the sooner you’ll regain the joy of motherhood!

Baby blues go away, but postnatal depression is much less easy to live through! Specific care might be needed. Don’t hesitate to consult your health care team.



What can I do to prevent the baby blues from turning into depression?

It is important to take care of yourself to avoid being overcome by exhaustion. Here are some tips to help you through these difficult times.

- > Ask for help from family members or friends for household tasks. You need some time to rest. Don't hesitate to ask, it happens to everyone!
- > Talk about your fears and emotions with your loved ones. This will help them understand what you're going through and what you need.
- > Take time for yourself. Take every opportunity to relax and catch up on your lost sleep. Don't feel guilty about using these breaks to restore your energy. You need it to fulfill your role as a mother more effectively.

Who can I contact for help or to ask questions?

At the CHUM Birthing Centre, contact the Perinatal Clinic, from Monday to Friday, from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

> **514 890-8000, ext. 36396**

or the psychologist at the Birthing Centre.

> **514 890-8000, ext. 36277**

Outside of these hours, call the Postpartum Unit.

> **514 890-8426**

You can also direct your questions to a perinatal nurse at your neighbourhood CLSC (local community services centre), or call Info-Santé at **8-1-1**.



USEFUL RESOURCES

From Tiny Tot to Toddler: A Practical Guide for Parents from Pregnancy to Age Two. A copy of this guide was given to you at your first visit. You can also consult it online:

> www.inspq.qc.ca/en/tiny-tot

The support kit produced by professionals at CHU Ste-Justine, entitled *Le bien-être en période périnatale* (available in French only):

> chusj.org

Click on Soins et services → Grandes spécialités → Grossesse, Accouchement et Postnatal → Santé mentale périnatale

Ligne Parents (parents hotline, French):

> **1 800 361-5085**

(24 hours/day, 7 days/week)

> ligneparents.com

Centres de Ressources Périnatales du Québec: Numerous services and workshops are offered to parents across Quebec, including physical activities with baby and support for postnatal depression.

> **418 336-3316**

> rcrpq.com/english-version/

The Postpartum Journey:

> postpartum.org/the-journey

Postpartum Support International:

> postpartum.net

Find a phone hotline service in your area:

> yourlifecounts.org

Click on Find Help Now

To learn more about pregnancy, delivery, or follow-up care, visit our internet site.



Videos, other fact sheets, and more resources are available at:

centredesnaissanceschum.com

The content of this document in no way replaces the recommendations and diagnoses made, or the treatment suggested by your health professional.

To find out more about the Centre hospitalier de l'Université de Montréal
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