



## The Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)

The Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)\* is a screening questionnaire that can indicate whether a new mother has symptoms that are commonly seen in women with Depression during pregnancy and in the year following the birth of a child. The EPDS was developed to assist primary care health professionals in detecting mothers suffering from Postpartum Depression, a distressing disorder more prolonged than the "baby blues," which occurs in the first week after delivery, and resolves within two to three weeks postpartum. Previous studies have shown that Postpartum Depression affects as many as 20% of new mothers, and that many depressed mothers remain untreated. These mothers may find ways to cope with parenting their baby and other household tasks, but their enjoyment of life is seriously affected, and it is very possible that untreated postpartum mood disturbances can have long-term impacts on the entire family.

In this 10-item screening scale, the mother chooses which of the 4 possible responses is closest to how she has been feeling during the past week. All 10 items must be completed, and it is important that the mother not discuss her responses with anyone until she has completed all of the items. Most women complete the scale without difficulty in less than 5 minutes. The EPDS has a high rate of reliability; nevertheless, it should not override professional clinical judgment. A careful assessment by a skilled clinician familiar with Postpartum Mood Disorders should be carried out to confirm a diagnosis and facilitate connection with appropriate treatment resources.

\* The Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)  
(J.L. Cox, J.M. Holden, & R. Sagovsky; Department of Psychiatry, University of Edinburgh)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

Pregnancy       Pregnancy loss       Postpartum \_\_\_\_\_ days/weeks/months

**Please circle the answer which comes closest to how you have felt in the past 7 days.**

**1. I have been able to laugh and see the funny side of things.**

- 0 As much as I always could
- 1 Not quite so much now
- 2 Not so much now
- 3 Not at all

**6. Things have been too much for me.**

- 3 Yes, most of the time I haven't been able to cope at all
- 2 Yes, sometimes I haven't been coping as well as usual
- 1 No, most of the time I have coped well
- 0 No, I have been coping as well as ever

**2. I have looked forward with enjoyment to things.**

- 0 As much as I ever did
- 1 Somewhat less than I used to
- 2 A lot less than I used to
- 3 Hardly at all

**7. I have been so unhappy that I have had difficulty sleeping.**

- 3 Yes, most of the time
- 2 Yes, sometimes
- 1 Not very often
- 0 No, not at all

**3. I have blamed myself unnecessarily when things went wrong.**

- 0 No, not at all
- 1 Hardly ever
- 2 Yes, sometimes
- 3 Yes, very often

**8. I have felt sad or miserable.**

- 3 Yes, most of the time
- 2 Yes, quite often
- 1 Not very often
- 0 No, not at all

**4. I have been anxious or worried for no good reason.**

- 3 Yes, often
- 2 Yes, sometimes
- 1 No, not much
- 0 No, not at all

**9. I have been so unhappy that I have been crying.**

- 3 Yes, most of the time
- 2 Yes, quite often
- 1 Only occasionally
- 0 No, never

**5. I have felt scared or panicky for no good reason.**

- 3 Yes, often
- 2 Yes, sometimes
- 1 No, not much
- 0 No, not at all

**10. The thought of harming myself has occurred to me.**

- 3 Yes, quite often
- 2 Sometimes
- 1 Hardly ever
- 0 Never

Total Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Initial screening     Follow-up screening

## Scoring

The total score is calculated by adding together the numbers you selected for each of the 10 items. A score of 10 may require a repeat assessment, as symptoms of Depression may be present. A score of 12 indicates that Depression is likely, and further assessment by a trained healthcare provider is recommended. **If any number other than “0” is circled for item number 10, further assessment is required right away. Please contact your healthcare provider immediately.**

The EPDS is a screening tool and should not override clinical judgment. A comprehensive clinical assessment by a professional skilled in working with Postpartum Mood Disorders should confirm the diagnosis.

## References

Cox, J.L., Holden, J.M., & Sagovsky, R. (1987). Detection of Postnatal Depression: Development of the 10-item Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale. *British Journal of Psychiatry*, 782-786.