



Mood Disorders of the Postpartum Period

Mood Disorders of the postpartum period	Rate of incidence	Onset of symptoms	Major symptoms
Depression	Up to 15 percent of new mothers	Anytime in the first year and a half after birth	Lack of energy; mood swings; feelings of hopelessness and/or worthlessness; feeling overwhelmed; irritability or anger; mental confusion; forgetfulness; feelings of guilt or shame; diminished or absent sex drive; sleep difficulties; changes in appetite; thoughts of self-harm or suicide
Anxiety	Up to 10 percent of new mothers	Anytime in the first year and a half after birth	Excessive worry or concern that is hard to control; feeling restless or on edge; muscle tension; fatigue; difficulty concentrating; sleep difficulties
Panic Disorder	Up to 10 percent of new mothers	Anytime in the first year and a half after birth	Anxiety; feelings of dread; fear of dying or going crazy; shortness of breath; heart palpitations or racing heartbeat; chest pains or discomfort; faintness or dizziness; feelings of choking or smothering; nausea; shaking or trembling; hot flashes or chills; numbness or tingling; sweating or sweaty palms; feeling disoriented or as if the world has become unreal

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder	Roughly 3 to 5 percent of new mothers	Anytime in the first year and a half after birth	<p><i>Obsessions</i>, as characterized by recurrent and persistent thoughts, impulses, or images that are experienced, at some time during the disturbance, as intrusive and inappropriate, and that cause marked anxiety or distress.</p> <p><i>Compulsions</i>, as characterized by repetitive behaviors or mental acts that the person feels driven to perform in response to an obsession, or according to rules that must be applied rigidly. <i>At some point during the course of the disorder the person has recognized that the obsessions or compulsions are excessive or unreasonable.</i></p>
Posttraumatic Stress Disorder	Up to 6 percent of new mothers	Typically within the first six months after birth, but may occur later in the postpartum period as well	<p>Experience of an event that was perceived by the individual as traumatic; flashbacks or sudden intrusive memories of the event; nightmares; exaggerated startle response (“edginess”); hyperarousal (always being “on guard”); hypervigilance (constantly monitoring for stressors or looming trouble); intense physiological distress (such as panic attacks, sweating, nausea) upon exposure to events similar to the traumatic event; inability to recall important aspects of the traumatic event; avoidance of reminders of the traumatic event; anger or rage; fantasies of retaliation; cynicism or distrust; foreshortened sense of the future; hypersensitivity to injustice; Anxiety; Depression</p>

<p>Bipolar Disorder</p> <p>There are two main types of Bipolar Disorder: Bipolar I and Bipolar II. Some experts, however, believe Bipolar Disorder actually exists on a spectrum.</p>	<p>Incidence in the postpartum period is somewhat unclear; Bipolar Disorder occurs in about 2.6 percent of the general population</p>	<p>Typically within the first few days to weeks after birth, but may occur later in the postpartum period as well</p>	<p><i>Bipolar I Disorder</i> is characterized by intense mood episodes that include at least one episode of Major Depression (see symptom list above) and one episode of Mania (see symptom list below). <i>Bipolar II Disorder</i> is diagnosed when a woman has had at least one Hypomanic episode (a shorter and less intense version of Mania) and at least one episode of Major Depression.</p> <p>Symptoms of Mania or Hypomania include: Changes in mood for a distinct period of time, such as feeling extremely and unusually happy, optimistic, euphoric, or irritable; changes in thinking, such as racing thoughts, unrealistic self-confidence, difficulty concentrating, grandiose plans, hallucinations or delusions; changes in behavior, such as increased activity or socializing, immersion in plans or projects, talking very rapidly and excessively, excessive spending, impaired judgment, or impulsive sexual activity; changes in physical condition, such as less need for sleep, increased energy, and fewer health complaints</p>
<p>Psychosis</p> <p>Researchers are now finding that most of the time, psychotic episodes in the postpartum period are due to Bipolar Disorder.</p>	<p>0.001 - 0.002 percent of all new mothers, or 1 to 2 in every 1000 new mothers</p>	<p>Typically within the first few days to weeks after birth, but may occur later in the postpartum period as well</p>	<p>Hallucinations; delusions; disordered thinking; sleep disturbances; agitation; social withdrawal; behavioral changes; loss of motivation; severe and rapid mood swings; incoherence; blunting of affect or emotions; inability to differentiate hallucinations from reality</p>

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