



## Mood Disorders of the Postpartum Period

<b>Mood Disorders of the postpartum period</b>	<b>Rate of incidence</b>	<b>Onset of symptoms</b>	<b>Major symptoms</b>
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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