



**You are going to be
a mum or dad.
How are you doing?**

*Information on depression
during pregnancy and after
the birth.*



A baby changes your life

Every birth changes your life. The daily routine changes, there are new tasks and roles in the family must be reorganised. Not all changes are pleasant: a baby needs a lot of attention. The huge responsibility and sleepless nights are stressful. Changes to your body and hormones can be difficult. Conflicts in the relationship often increase and enjoyable moments together become rarer.

What is postpartum depression?

The time after you give birth is stressful for your mental health. Almost 15 per cent of mothers and 9 per cent of fathers suffer from depression as a result. This depression is called postpartum depression. Depression can develop in both women and men during pregnancy. However, sometimes parents feel symptoms only months after the birth.

Some of the possible signs that you have depression can include:

You feel tired, have no energy, you cannot find joy, you feel sad, sometimes irritable or hopeless. Sometimes you can no longer sleep well, have a poor appetite or find it harder to concentrate. You may feel overwhelmed or extremely anxious. Sometimes you have negative/bad feelings towards your own child. Perhaps you are afraid of not being a good mother or father or are very worried about your baby. It may also be that you are unable to establish a relationship or find emotional connection with your baby.

It might be that not all of these signs are apparent; it is still possible that you are suffering from depression.

Depression can and should be treated - the sooner, the better. It is therefore important that you talk openly about your feelings and get help quickly. If you are not feeling well, talk to your midwife, gynaecologist or parenting counsellor about it.

Self-check for depression



Tick how often you have not felt well in the last two weeks for these reasons:

Little interest or joy in what you do

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> not at all (0) | <input type="checkbox"/> on some days (1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> on more than half of the days (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> almost every day (3) |

Feeling of dejection, melancholy or hopelessness

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> not at all (0) | <input type="checkbox"/> on some days (1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> on more than half of the days (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> almost every day (3) |

Source: Core questions on depression from the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-2; Löwe, K. Kroenke, K. Gräfe, 2005)

Assessment

Add up the numbers in brackets for the two ticked boxes.

If the result is three or more: Seek advice from a specialist. They can assess your situation and provide you with suitable help and support. Addresses are listed on the following pages.

When the result is less than three: You have no or few symptoms that indicate depression. Nevertheless, it is worth taking a good look at yourself.

Use the following link for a detailed questionnaire on postpartum depression in 17 different languages:
postpartale-depression.ch/de/hilfe/fragebogen.html



Baby blues ≠ Depression

It is often not easy to recognise postpartum depression. It is also important to distinguish postpartum depression from what is commonly known as the **baby blues**. The **baby blues** are normal and many mothers have them. The baby blues come a few days after the birth and last a week at most. During the baby blues, mums cry a lot, are emotional, anxious and sensitive. The reason for this is the change in hormones after the birth. However, the baby blues pass on their own. If a mother feels unwell for more than a week after giving birth, it is probably not due to the baby blues and she may have postpartum depression.

Talk about it

When parents are not feeling well and are overwhelmed and exhausted, they often find it difficult to talk to someone about it. It can help to talk to your own family or friends, for example. New parents usually expect to be happy after the birth and feel ashamed if they are not happy. **However, mental health crises after the birth are not uncommon.**

The fear of being a bad parent

Parents in a mental health crisis sometimes worry about being a bad mum or dad. Sometimes parents are even afraid that their baby could be taken away from them. However, this happens very rarely and only in emergency situations. **Postpartum mental illness usually responds very well to treatment.** Most of those affected and their families recover and are able to build a good relationship with their child.

Existing mental illness

Did you already have a mental illness, such as depression, before you became pregnant? If so, it is a good idea to talk to your gynaecologist about it before you become pregnant. It may be possible to continue taking medication for mental illnesses (e.g. antidepressants) during pregnancy and while breastfeeding. Talk to a doctor or psychiatrist about this.



Seek help

Acute crisis

These centres are always there for you, even at night:

Emergency call for parents:

Tel. 0848 35 45 55

Medical emergency call centre:

Tel. 061 261 15 15

Dargebotene Hand

(The Helping Hand): **Tel. 143**

(All three services are offered free of charge)

The **walk-in outpatient clinic** on Kornhausgasse at UPK Basel offers psychiatric care without prior appointment: [upk.ch/akutambulanz](https://www.upk.ch/akutambulanz)

Tel. 061 325 81 81,

e-mail: zdk@upk.ch

Simply drop by at Kornhausgasse 7 in Basel anytime from Monday to Friday between 8.00 a.m. and 4.00 p.m.

(covered by health insurance)

Parenting counselling on depression and questions about parenting, family roles and a child's development, care, nutrition and sleep:

www.muetterberatung-bl-bs.ch

(free of charge)

Therapy: Your doctor can refer you to a psychotherapist. Use the following link to find specialists for counselling or therapy: www.doc24.ch

(covered by health insurance)

For translations into your respective language, on the phone or on site, visit:

<https://www.inter-pret.ch/de/angebote/regionale-vermittlungsstellen-237.html>

Therapy support options include:

Psychosocial consultation at the Women's Clinic of the University Hospital Basel specialises in counselling for mental illnesses related to pregnancy and childbirth: **Tel. 061 328 53 21,**
e-mail: gyn.psychosomatik@usb.ch

(covered by health insurance)

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