Depression During and After Pregnancy: When It’s More Than the Baby Blues

What is peripartum depression?
Around the time you have a baby, you might have normal mood changes. This can last for up to 10 days. It is called baby blues. Sometimes, it is more severe and lasts longer. This is called peripartum depression.

Many new mothers with peripartum depression feel better within a few weeks. Sometimes, it takes longer to feel better and treatment is needed. This is more likely in mothers who have more severe symptoms or who have had depression before.

Will I always feel like this?
Sometimes therapy or medicine is needed, but almost all women eventually feel better.

What can I do to help myself feel better?
Eat a healthy diet, exercise, and sleep when you can. Take walks outside with your baby. Most importantly, if you notice any of the symptoms mentioned above, tell your doctor right away.

Where can I get more information?
Your doctor

AAFP’s Patient Education Resource

American Psychological Association

National Institute of Mental Health

Postpartum Support International
http://www.postpartum.net/

U.S. National Library of Medicine

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