



Baby blues

Patient information

Adjusting to the postnatal period

The term “baby blues” refers to a period of emotional adjustment after the delivery of your baby. The baby blues are common, often temporary and tend to pass after a week or two. For some women, it can be quite intense and involve some difficult feelings.



Who?

All new mums experience some level of adjustment after birth, with 80 percent experiencing symptoms of baby blues. While new mums can feel excitement and love, many may also experience feelings such as:

- Low mood
- Numbness
- Helplessness
- Sadness
- Exhaustion
- Anxiousness
- Decreased concentration
- Reliving the birth
- Feelings of doubt.

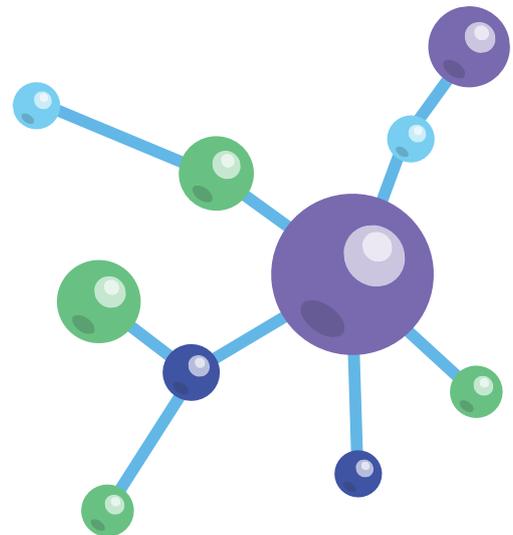
Why?

The first three days after birth women experience a significant drop in hormone levels. The baby blues are thought to be caused by this rapid change in hormone levels, as well as:

- Decreased sleep and exhaustion
- The birth experience
- Change in relationship dynamics and family structure
- Family history of baby blues.

Managing your expectations, advice from others, physically recovering from the birth and adjusting to your new body can also all contribute to the baby blues.

Baby blues should ease within two weeks. If you are still experiencing symptoms after this, please contact your health professional.



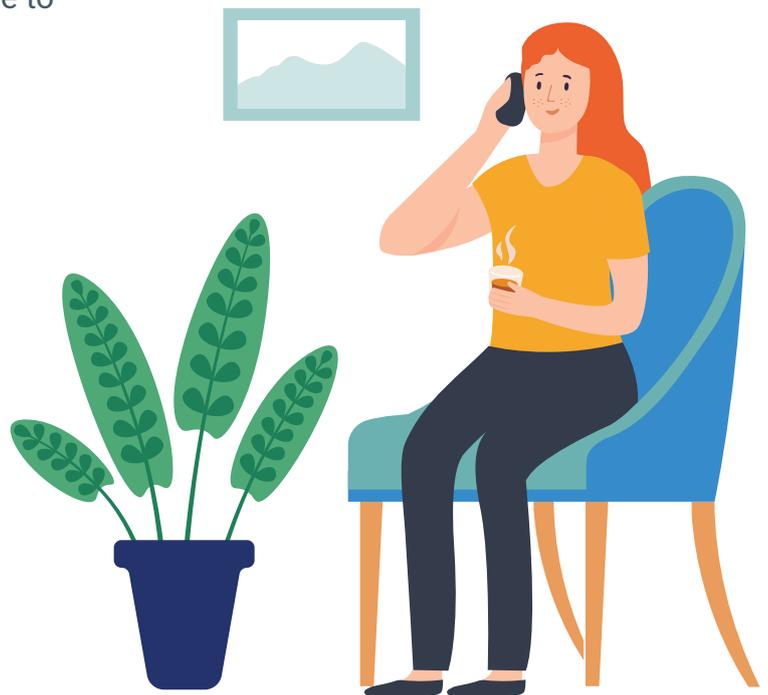
What can I do?

- Identify your sources of support to assist during this time by helping with housework or looking after the baby while you sleep.
- Work towards meeting your sleep quota over 24 hours, as opposed to just at night.
- Keep your goals simple for the first two weeks and focus on small achievements.
- Be kind to yourself and feel your emotions without judgement.
- Skin-to-skin contact, including breastfeeding, can help your wellbeing and your baby's, as well as help with bonding.
- Try to maintain a nutritious diet.
- Keep hydrated by drinking lots of water.
- It's OK to make mistakes; it's a time for learning through experience and trial and error.
- Speak to your midwife, child health nurse or GP if you're still experiencing symptoms of the baby blues after two weeks. They will be able to help you and your baby.

Further help

If you feel that your mental health is not improving or is impacting your ability to function, please call:

- Your GP/doctor or midwife
- Your delivering hospital's psychology service
 - WNHS Mental Health Service at King Edward Memorial Hospital: (08) 6458 1521
 - Fiona Stanley Hospital Perinatal Mental Health: (08) 6152 6111 or (08) 6152 1582
- Perinatal Anxiety and Depression (PANDA) helpline: 1300 726 306
- Gidget Foundation helpline: 1300 851 758
- ForWhen (care navigation service): 1300 242 322.
- Lifeline: 13 11 14



The information provided is for information purposes only. If you are a patient using this publication, you should seek assistance from a healthcare professional when interpreting these materials and applying them to your individual circumstances.



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