

# DADS' ROLE IN POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

Dads play a very important role in postpartum depression because they are usually the first to realize there is a problem. That's why they need to know the signs and symptoms of postpartum depression. They need to be able to recognize it and intervene, if necessary.

Be prepared to talk to Mom about prenatal and PPD during the pregnancy. Discuss the possibility of the conditions, and discuss how you will handle them if they appear.

When new moms are dealing with PPD, dads often have to take on additional responsibilities.

The important thing to remember is that PPD is about Mom, so be encouraging and supportive, and never undermine her feelings, even when she says things that may seem silly. This is how she feels, so stand beside her and encourage her. Try not to get angry with her or judge her, and do not try to talk her out of her depression.

Set up support systems for both Mom and yourself. For mom, ask her doctor for a referral to a healthcare professional who is trained in dealing with PPD, and look for a support group for her where she can share with and listen to other moms who are dealing with the same issues. Attend as many of her appointments with her as you can. As for you, do not hold things in or try to handle everything on your own. Take care of yourself, and give yourself a break when you need it.

PPD can't right itself overnight. It will take some time, but there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Just stay open and receptive to Mom, and love her. You are the best medicine.

## CHOOSING A THERAPIST

Questions to consider when choosing a therapist::

- ▶ What are the therapist's credentials? Does he/she have personal or professional experience with PPD?
- ▶ What is the therapist's approach to therapy? How will he/she help me set and reach my goals?
- ▶ Do I feel the therapist will respect and support me?
- ▶ Am I willing to be vulnerable with this therapist?
- ▶ Does this therapist make me feel safe?
- ▶ Would I be more comfortable with a man or a woman?

Types of therapists include psychotherapists, psychiatrists, psychologists, nurses, family and marriage therapists and clinical social workers.

 **Mood Changes and Mom**  
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