

Post-Partum Depression

Getting the Support You Most Need



Kansas City

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City (Blue KC) and New Directions Behavioral Health, an independent company that manages behavioral health benefits for Blue KC, are working together to give you the support you need at a time you need it the most.



Recognizing the Symptoms

Baby Blues or Post-Partum Depression

Experts believe hormonal changes brought on by childbirth trigger feelings of depression in many women. It's estimated that about 50-80 percent of women experience a short period of mild depression known as the 'baby blues' directly following childbirth.¹ However, about 10 percent of women have a more serious, longer lasting emotional change after childbirth known as post-partum depression.¹ Recognizing the symptoms is key to seeking the treatment and support you most need.

Blue KC, together with New Directions Behavioral Health, offers specialized treatment for members who may suffer from the baby blues or post-partum depression.

If you experience any of the symptoms in the table for more than three weeks, call New Directions Behavioral Health or your healthcare provider. If you are experiencing post-partum depression symptoms (refer to table), call New Directions Behavioral Health and your healthcare provider right away. Getting professional care will make your recovery faster and may help you avoid more serious symptoms.

Symptoms	Baby Blues	Post-Partum Depression
Emotionally empty	✓	
Uncontrollable crying	✓	
Tiredness or irritation	✓	✓
Low energy	✓	✓
Anxiety or worry	✓	✓
Problems concentrating		✓
Guilty feelings		✓
Lack of interest in the baby		✓
Feelings of hopelessness		✓
Fear of hurting oneself or baby		✓
Not feeling good enough		✓
Less interest in sexual intimacy		✓
Panic attacks		✓
Unusual thoughts or ideas		✓

1. "More than Just the Blues". American Academy of Family Physicians, September 2012. Web. <<http://bit.ly/15W00Su>>.

Post-Partum Depression, continued

Learn the Post-Partum Depression Triggers

Any woman can get post-partum depression within a year of being pregnant, including a woman who has miscarried. First-time mothers frequently have a higher risk, but post-partum depression can happen to any woman.

Additionally, there are other factors that may increase a woman's risk for post-partum depression after childbirth:

Poor Support System - Little or no help from a partner, parents or friends.

History of Depression - Noted periods of depression prior to pregnancy, including diagnosis of illnesses such as bipolar disorder.

Stress and Trauma - Physical trauma experienced during childbirth or the result of childbirth.

Steps to Help Prevent the 'Baby Blues' from Turning into Post-Partum Depression

Develop a support system – While you are still pregnant, engage family or friends who have experienced childbirth and parenthood for guidance and help. Research and secure a doctor for your baby as well as a daycare provider if necessary. Consider how you will manage, and seek help if available, with daily household responsibilities.

Focus on tasks important to you – Once home with your baby, try not to take on additional responsibilities such as entertaining guests or caring for a sick relative. And avoid making major decisions.

Keep a regular schedule – Allow yourself plenty of rest and sleep. Take naps when your baby naps. Eat nutritious meals and maintain physical exercise.

Continue outside interests – Give yourself time away from your baby.

Maintain important relationships – Take time to discuss important issues with your husband or partner. Getting away together will nurture your relationship and keep stress low.

If you begin noticing the signs of post-partum depression, talk with your obstetrician, family doctor, or a mental health specialist about treatment.



Treating Post-Partum Depression

As a Blue KC member, you have 24-hour access to comprehensive behavioral health benefits through New Directions Behavioral Health. You can speak with a licensed behavioral health professional who has special training and resources to help you find providers in your Blue KC health plan network that specialize in identifying and treating post-partum depression.

New Directions Behavioral Health can also refer you to providers who specialize in treating other forms of depression and mental health disorders, substance abuse and grief support.

Seeking treatment can improve your ability to take care of your baby and make your role as a mother more enjoyable. Blue KC and New Directions Behavioral Health are here to give you the support you need during the time you need it the most.

New Directions Behavioral Health offers 24/7 access to a licensed professional. Call the number on your Blue Cross and Blue Shield member ID card to be connected or visit NDBH.com.