

# What Postpartum Depression and Anxiety Can Feel Like



## These are some things you can feel with postpartum depression (PPD):

- You miss your old life. Parenting isn't what you expected, and you are sad that this is your new normal.
- You just want the baby to go to sleep, so you can be away from them. You feel dread when you think they are waking up or that you have to spend time alone with them.
- You are going through the motions of caring for your baby, but you are afraid that you aren't as bonded as other parents.
- You get angry or frustrated a lot - with your baby/kids, partner (if you have one) and even yourself.
- Everything seems to annoy you and you have trouble calming down.
- You're pretty sure you suck at parenting. You feel like you can't do anything right, it's your fault that they cry and have trouble sleeping, and you sometimes wonder if they would be better off without you.
- You don't feel much at all. You are totally spaced out, feel empty and have trouble connecting or paying attention.
- Your body feels heavy and you don't feel grounded. You feel like you could lie down and sleep for days on end.
- You cry a lot. It's hard to believe that this is your life. You have flight fantasies of running away or living a different life.

## These are some things you can feel with postpartum anxiety (PPA):

- You are totally in your head thinking, worrying, and stressing about problems that could happen - some of which are possible but out of your control and some of which are very unlikely.
- Your body feels ramped up and agitated all the time. It feels like you can't take a deep breath.
- You feel tired all the time but are having trouble falling asleep, or you wake up from sleeping because your brain and body won't turn off.
- You have scary thoughts of terrible things happening to your baby and or other loved ones. They seem to come out of nowhere and the graphic, sexual or violent nature of the thoughts are sometimes so terrifying, you can't believe you had them and are afraid to tell people about them.
- You have had one or more panic attacks and you live in fear of having more.
- You have a never ending to do list of housework and childcare. You are obsessed with keeping everything in order and doing everything right.
- You don't want to be alone with the baby because you are afraid you can't handle it or that things will go wrong. You may also never want to be away from the baby and get very agitated when people take the baby from you - even if they are in the same room.
- You are eating really differently. Either you can't eat or can't stop eating.
- You have tried to calm down but can't. The things you used to do to relax during stressful or anxious times don't seem to be working.

Adapted from Olivia Scobie, Postpartum Support Toronto



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