Title: Postpartum Depression

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Abstract: Postpartum depression is a very common ailment in women following childbirth. Approximately 8-15% of mothers struggle with postpartum depression. Fortunately, there are simply screening tools and treatment for the problem. This information sheet explains postpartum depression symptoms and treatment, as well as provides references for further information.

Postpartum Depression

Postpartum depression is a common problem in women in the first few months after having a baby. In fact, 8-15% of women who have babies struggle with postpartum depression.[1]

What does postpartum depression look like?

Women with postpartum depression may feel sad, worthless, helpless, or even have thoughts of hurting themselves or their baby. Women who have these symptoms are not bad mothers, and have not done anything wrong.

Who gets postpartum depression?

Any woman could get postpartum depression. No one knows why some people have postpartum depression and others do not. Women who have had depression before pregnancy may be at a higher risk than other women.

How do I know if I have postpartum depression?

If you are worried that you may have postpartum depression, talk to your doctor! By answering a short list of easy questions about your daily life and how you have been feeling, your doctor can find out if you are depressed.

What can I do about it?

Fortunately, there are ways to treat postpartum depression! The symptoms can be treated either with medications, or with talk therapy. It is up to the woman and her doctor to decide which method is best for her.

Where can I find more information?

http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/007215.htm

http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/postpartum-depression/DS00546

References

1. Appleby L, Warner R, Whitton A et al: A controlled study of fluoxetine and cognitive-behavioral counselling in the treatment of postnatal depression. BMJ 1997; 314:932.

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