SHADES of BLUE PROJECT

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Baby blues or postpartum depression

Two weeks is not a waiting period

You can love your baby and still struggle emotionally. Notice changes, ask for an assessment, and let others support you.

01 Baby blues

- Mild tearfulness, worry, and feeling overwhelmed may appear during the first days after birth. [1]
- These brief mood changes generally improve within two weeks. Notice whether symptoms are improving or becoming harder to manage. [1]
- Severe symptoms at any time deserve prompt assessment, even when you are only a few days postpartum. [1]

02 Postpartum depression

- Symptoms may be stronger, last longer, or interfere with daily life. Depression can begin during the first year. [1]
- Watch for hopelessness, irritability, withdrawal, loss of interest, difficulty connecting, or trouble sleeping when rest is possible. [1]
- Postpartum depression is treatable. A clinician may recommend therapy, medication, or both, based on your needs. [2]

03 Take the next step

- Tell your clinician what changed and when. Ask for a mental health assessment and a clear follow up plan.
- Ask a trusted person to help make the call, arrange transportation, or handle a household task while you get care.
- Severe confusion, losing touch with reality, or immediate danger requires emergency care. Do not assume these are baby blues. [2]

Needing care does not make you a bad parent. Your wellbeing deserves attention alongside your baby's needs.

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

Find support shadesofblueproject.org/support **Request services →**

U.S. immediate danger or suspected psychosis: call 911 or go to an emergency department. **Suicidal crisis or emotional distress:** call 988 or text 988.

Maternal support: call or text 1 833 852 6262. Free, confidential, 24/7. HRSA. Not a crisis line.

Sources [1] OWH Postpartum Depression [2] NIMH Perinatal Depression

Educational information, not a diagnosis. Updated November 17, 2026.