

# Dads Report Postnatal Depression

Postnatal depression affects up to 10% of fathers during the first year of their child's life. No one knows the exact cause.

Researchers tell us that the fathers most at-risk of postnatal depression:

- Have a history of depression,
- Feel pressure with new responsibilities,
- Worry about finances,
- Suffer work-related stress, and
- Feel stress due to lifestyle changes.

Postpartum depression in the mother is another risk factor for postnatal depression in dads. Depressed moms cannot provide needed support for the dad. In addition, dads may have household and child care duties added to their already busy routines.

How can a family member or friend recognize postnatal depression in a dad? They can identify the usual symptoms. Does dad:

- Isolate himself and avoid friends?
- Lack interest in activities he once enjoyed?
- Fail to perform well at work?


Other symptoms include:

- A change in appetite,
- Unexplained aches and pains,
- Excessive worrying – feeling anxious,
- A problem with sleep, or
- A lack of energy.

If family or friends see two or more of these symptoms for more than two weeks, they should encourage dad to see a doctor. He can also:

- Talk with someone he trusts.
- Seek support through family and friends.
- Spend time with the baby, establishing a routine and schedule. This will also help create a strong, sensitive bonding feeling.

Encourage dad to seek professional counseling if he is not feeling better or getting worse.

 Resources on postnatal depression include: [mhcci.org](http://mhcci.org) (mental health center of Illinois) [postpartummen.com](http://postpartummen.com); [www.nct.org.uk](http://www.nct.org.uk)



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