

# Your emotional wellbeing and mental health

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Having a baby can be joyful, exciting and rewarding. However, it is also common for new mothers or fathers to experience anxiety, depression or emotional distress.

As many as one in five women experience emotional difficulties during pregnancy and in the first year after their baby's birth. This can happen to anyone.

## 'Baby blues'

During the first week, the majority of women experience a short lived change in emotions commonly known as 'baby blues'. This is due to the sudden hormonal changes within the body, combined with altered sleep patterns and lifestyle adjustment. This is very common and will only last a few days.

Symptoms include:

- feeling emotional and irrational
- crying over seemingly small things or 'over nothing'
- feeling irritable
- feeling sad or anxious
- feeling physically exhausted and overwhelmed.

It is important to seek support from your family, friends and midwife during this time and try to get as much rest as possible.

## Postnatal depression and anxiety

Around one in seven parents will struggle with their emotional well-being and may develop postnatal depression or anxiety within the first year after childbirth. Struggling emotionally at this time can happen to anyone. It is not your fault.