

What are the signs of postpartum depression and what can be done about it?

In May of 2009 when Dr. Gerald F. Joseph Jr, became the 60th president of ACOG, he announced that postpartum depression would be the theme of his presidential initiative.

As many as 1 out of 8 women have postpartum depression. It is a serious medical condition that can pose risks for the woman and her baby. It can begin at any time within the first 3 months after delivery.

Women with postpartum depression generally have five or more of the following symptoms lasting 2 weeks or longer:

- Having little interest in her usual activities or hobbies
- Feeling tired all the time
- Changes in how much or how little she wants to eat
- Gaining or losing weight
- Having trouble sleeping or sleeping too much
- Having trouble concentrating or making decisions
- Thinking about suicide or death

Postpartum depression can be treated in several ways. Support groups may help. Some women go to therapy or counseling with a mental health professional. Some women require the use of antidepressants. The Ob Gyn remains on the front lines for the screening and identification of patient's with postpartum depression.