

Postpartum Mood

What am I feeling?



My Strategies:

When I am feeling anxious or low, I will:

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____

“ My daily affirmation is:

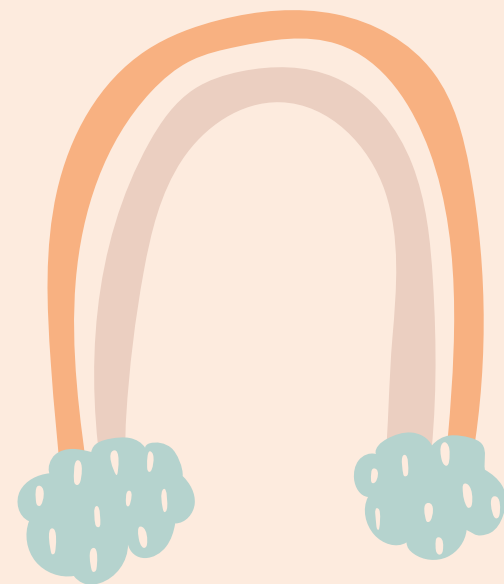
_____”

Helpful Apps & Resources:

- **MindShift CBT:** an app to track mood and develop tools for coping with anxiety
- **Headspace:** an app to help guide meditation and improve sleep quality
- **Down Dog:** yoga and fitness apps for quick and simple at home workouts
- **Healthy Babies Healthy Children (905-546-3550):** help finding community programs and supports for new parents
- **EarlyON Centre (905-546-2489):** play based programming for infants and support for caregivers

If your symptoms are not improving, visit your family doctor to talk about options for managing your mood. If you are in a mental health crisis, call COAST (905-972-8338) or visit the emergency department at your closest hospital.

Postpartum Mood Support Strategies



HAMILTON POSTPARTUM PEER SUPPORT GROUP
FREE • VIRTUAL • DROP-IN
TUESDAYS @ 10:15AM

email: crownpointmidwives@gmail.com
follow: [@hamiltonpostpartum](https://www.instagram.com/hamiltonpostpartum)
www.hamiltonpostpartum.ca

BABY BLUES

80% of parents experience postpartum blues. Beginning around day 3-5 (often when your milk starts to come in) you may feel sad, tearful, irritable, tired and overwhelmed for several days. This can be a normal response to parenthood, and is thought to be due to hormonal influences during the first two weeks after your baby is born.

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION

10-16% of pregnant people experience depression in the first year after giving birth. Most individuals notice significant changes in their mood within the first 6 weeks, but it can occur anytime from 2 weeks to 1 year postpartum. You may feel intense sadness, irritability, guilt, anxiousness, numbness, hopeless, or overwhelmed. You may not enjoy things you once did, withdraw from your support system and notice changes to appetite, sleep and energy levels.

POSTPARTUM ANXIETY

1 in 4 people experience anxiety at some point in their lifetime. The time period after having a baby can increase the likelihood of developing anxiety. You may notice recurrent upsetting thoughts, excessive worries about your baby, avoid certain places or activities, need lots of reassurance and overdo activities such as cleaning or checking on baby. Anxiety also causes physical symptoms, such as trembling, rapid heart rate, shallow breathing and stomach pain. Many new parents will experience depression and anxiety at the same time.

Coping Strategies

On days of depression or during anxious moments, work through this list of strategies to find what works best for you.

- **Talk to someone:** connect with your spouse, videocall a friend or family member
- **Get outside:** walk around the block or sit on your front step with a book
- **Listen:** to your favourite music, podcast or audiobook
- **Prioritize your health:** drink a glass of water, take your vitamins, have a snack
- **Rest:** take a nap, meditate, create a bedtime ritual to help you unwind
- **Tidy up:** make your bed, clean up one mess in the house, water your plants
- **Social media:** post a photo, watch a video or take the day away from your phone
- **Exercise:** walk, run, cycle, dance, stretch, do yoga or try a new workout class
- **Write:** a card to someone you miss, journal about your day, make a to-do list
- **Make a mantra:** "This day shall pass", "I feel joy", "I will fully embrace today"
- **Plan ahead:** schedule a workout, book an appointment, invite a friend over
- **Take time:** away from the baby and do something solely for yourself
- **Pamper yourself:** take a shower or bath, moisturize and put on a comfy outfit
- **Slow down:** light a candle, practice meditation, have a cup of tea
- **Practice spirituality:** attend your place of worship or say a prayer
- **Find a hobby:** start a puzzle, play a board game, plant a garden
- **Be Gentle:** with yourself and your feelings

ROLL with Anxious Thoughts:

Recognize - acknowledge your anxious thought for what it is

Observe - allow your thought to be without judging or changing it

Let go - imagine thoughts as clouds floating in the sky

Learn - notice how clouds of thought change shape and float past you



Prioritizing Self-Care:

Practicing self-care is much easier said than done during the transition to life with a new baby. Use these strategies when asking your support system for help:

- **Make a list of the people in your life who can offer you support**
 - partner, family, friends, neighbors
- **Make a list of specific tasks you need help with**
 - laundry? groceries? dishes? meal prep? holding the baby?
- **Directly ask a support person for help with a specific task**
 - "can you please watch the baby Tuesday morning at 10am so I can go for a walk?"
- **If person cannot help, don't get discouraged. Ask someone else!**
 - Support people are often happy to help you with the specific task requested
- **Remember: strengthening your support network is an important tool in promoting your health and well-being**