



Scottish harebell
a fragile survivor

SELF-HELP FOR POSTNATAL DEPRESSION

- **REST**, rest and more rest. Tiredness can lead to exhaustion and then to depression. If you are not able to sleep, the put your feet up while feeding the baby, or better still while the baby is asleep. Do not rush around trying to catch up on the housework. Take time to relax.
- Eat small, regular meals, particularly if your appetite is poor. Do not rush whilst eating.
- Keep yourself occupied with small tasks, maybe some of those things you've always wanted to do or the book you've been meaning to read.
- Set yourself small. Achievable targets and take the time to congratulate yourself when you achieve them.
- Talk over your worries, bottling them up will only make them seem worse than they are.
- Take regular, gentle exercise, like swimming or walking. Exercise stimulates the body's natural painkillers, the endorphins and will then help you sleep.
- Keep a diary on how you are feeling. It may help you to look back and see how you are starting to feel better or to see if there is a pattern to the good and bad days.
- Make time for yourself. Do the things that will help you feel better such as a relaxing bath, a chat on the phone, coffee with a friend, and a trip to the fitness centre or hairdressers.
- Think positively. There is light at the end of the tunnel and you *will* gradually get better.
- Be patient. Recovery from postnatal depression is a gradual process full of ups and downs. Do not be discouraged by the bad days.
- Avoid making major decisions. undertaking stressful activities such as moving house or anxious situations.
- Do not be too hard on yourself. Don't dwell on the things which you are not able to do. As you get better you will be able to do more. Until then, be realistic in what you expect of yourself and recognise your won efforts in making yourself well.

Tel: 0775 468 7423