

Highland
Ante/
Postnatal
Illness & Depression
Support

H.A.P.I.S.



Scottish harebell
a fragile survivor

SUPPORTING SOMEONE YOU LOVE WITH POSTNATAL DEPRESSION

- Let her express her feelings. Try not to dismiss her fears or anxieties. No matter how irrational they seem, to her they are very real.
- Try to ensure that she is not often on her own. Women with postnatal depression find it much harder to cope and are potentially at risk if they are left alone.
- Show consideration and sympathy, no matter how tired or fed up you may feel.
- Encourage and praise her whenever she makes an effort.
- Encourage her to seek professional help if she has not already done so and accompany her if that will help.
- Help her to get out with friends, without the baby or other children, but don't force her to do anything she does not feel up to doing. She may find large gatherings stressful.
- Don't try to reason with her if she is not up to it. Often women suffering from postnatal depression find it difficult to reason or think logically.
- Be patient, no matter how hard this may be at times.
- Avoid saying things like "pull yourself together" or "you have a lovely baby you should be happy, you don't know how lucky you are". She knows this and feels guilty for being so down when she should be happily enjoying her baby.
- Do not point out shortcomings, unfinished jobs, unkempt appearance or loss of figure.
- Try not to show shock or amazement at anything she does or says.
- TO HUSBANDS/PARTNERS! - remember she is still your wife/partner not just the mother of your child. She needs constant, undemanding affection. She may experience loss of libido. Be patient and considerate. This is not a reflection on you, but a symptom of her illness and once that lifts she will respond sexually once more. If you have any concerns in this regard seek further help either from your GP or a relationship counsellor.
- DON'T BE DISCOURAGED - she will recover in time. You will get back the wife, partner, daughter or friend you think you have lost.

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