

Postpartum Depression is Dangerous

A number of women suffered from depression during the postnatal period, known as postnatal depression, are caused by dramatic changes of hormones as well as psychological and social problems contribute to developing depression after delivery. Their symptoms include emotional distress, headaches, insomnia, hair-loss, irritability etc. From psychological aspects, patients may find the conflicts of roles, feeling incompetent in childcare and loss of self identity. Social factors such as lack of spousal and social supports, as well as traditional expectations on observing postnatal rituals may also contribute to stresses. Three types of postpartum mental disorders can be identified, including Postpartum Blue, Postpartum depression and Postpartum Psychosis.

Postpartum Blue is commonly found in women with premenstrual symptoms, accidental pregnancy, thought of abortion, and emotional instability in late pregnancy. Its symptoms include tearful, fatigue, low mood, irritability, headache and insomnia etc.

Postpartum depression commonly have onset 4 to 6 weeks after delivery. Symptoms are similar to postpartum blue, though are more severe with a longer episode (6-9 months). More severe symptoms include the ideation of suicide and harming the baby.

Postpartum psychosis is the most severe type of postpartum mental disorders. Patients with early onset are often younger in age and have affective symptoms while those with late onset often suffer from schizophrenic symptoms. Its symptoms are loss of feelings, feelings of helplessness, delusional thoughts, etc. Foreign studies reported 5% suicide rate and 4% infanticide rate among these patients.

Women with postpartum mental disorders should engage different leisure activities. Family support is also very important. If the problem aggravates, patients should seek professional help from psychiatrists.