

Health Unit Media Release

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Life with a new baby is not always what you expect

Postpartum mood disorders (PPMD) affect one in five new moms, yet most people don't talk about depression when they talk about the arrival of a newborn baby. **A new province-wide campaign has been launched to get people talking about postpartum mood disorders (PPMD) and to help increase awareness of the issue.**

"Women need to understand that life with a new baby is not always what you expect, whether you're a first-time mom or have had other children," says Barb Willet, Manager, Best Start Resource Centre. "If women understand the symptoms of PPMD before they are in that postpartum fog, hopefully they will recognize the signs and reach out for help sooner."

Why is recognizing and treating PPMD important?

- Moms with PPMD suffer from a range of symptoms. They may experience hopelessness, restlessness, sadness, irritability or anxiety. Help may come in the form of supportive counselling, a support group and/or medication.
- Children of depressed mothers are affected by PPMD. Infants may have poor attachment with their mother. Toddlers and preschoolers may have poor self-control, and may have difficulties interacting with parents and other children. School aged children are more likely to have anxiety disorders, ADHD and learning disabilities (according to the Canadian Paediatric Society)
- Families with a new baby are already experiencing a certain level of stress. When mom has a PPMD, that level of stress increases.

Help is available:

Four out of five new moms experience the "baby blues". However, if they are experiencing hopelessness, restlessness, sadness, irritability or anxiety for more than two weeks, they may be suffering from postpartum mood disorders and should contact their health care provider or the Health Unit. **There are Post Partum Depression support groups available for women who live in Leeds, Grenville and Lanark. Childcare and assistance with transportation are available.**

For more info on PPMD, call the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit at 1-800-660-5853 or get more information from the website at www.healthunit.org/children.

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