

Where can I get further help?

If you are concerned about the baby blues make an appointment to see your GP or take a look at the Trust's website www.southwestyorkshire.nhs.uk to see what services we offer and contact details.

If you cannot get online please contact our customer services team on 0800 587 2108 for more details.

Follow us on Twitter to get updates on what we're doing: [@allofusinmind](https://twitter.com/allofusmind)

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Booklets available in this series:

- Anger – How do I manage it?
- Bereavement – How can I cope?
- Confidence – How can I get some?
- Healthy Living – What should I do?
- Healthy Sex – How can I be sure?
- Low Moods – How can I feel better?
- My body, my health. Check it out!
- Pain – What can I do to help myself?
- Self Harm – How can I help myself?
- Shyness – How can I manage it?
- Sleep – How can I get some?
- Stress – How do I manage it?
- The end of life – How can I prepare for it?
- Worries – How can I best deal with them?

Your feedback is welcome

We invite you to share any comments, compliments, concerns or complaints you have about the Trust. Please speak to a member of staff or contact our customers services team on 0800 587 2108, who can also provide help in understanding this information, including in other formats.



More women than you may think feel depressed after having a baby. This is called baby blues and is extremely common. Your body has undergone a massive hormonal change which causes you to feel emotional after birth. Add fatigue, physical pain and a massive routine change and you can see why many new mothers feel this way.

Images within the media of seemingly perfect babies and smiling mums can also increase pressure on new mothers to recreate that image. However, any mother knows that that these images are far from reality.

This booklet will explain what baby blues are and what steps you can take to look after yourself. If you want further help, you can organise a consultation with a healthcare professional.

Step one: What are the baby blues?

Baby blues is usually felt about 3 days after giving birth. The symptoms could include feeling low or struggling to look after yourself and your baby. Try not to worry as these feelings should not last very long but there are things you can do to help.

If you would like to know more about the baby blues or if these feelings last over 3 days then contact your midwife, health visitor or GP.

“*I'm not getting enough sleep, I feel worn out and I'm just going through the motions with my baby.*”

Step two: Be prepared

Before the birth spend some time thinking about what is going to happen/ what things are inevitable and what you can do beforehand to help yourself. Things like:

- Preparing, cooking and freezing meals
- Arranging for your partner or another family member to be around to help you during the first few weeks following the birth

After the birth only focus on what's important and completing the important tasks first while making sure you take plenty of breaks. Ask someone for help. Needing a bit of help is not a sign you can't cope and accepting help may mean you can get the rest you need and start to feel better sooner. Jobs that are not vital to you, your baby's or family's wellbeing can be left for another day.

Accept as a new mum you can't do everything all at once, especially as your body is still recovering.

“*I feel so irritated all the time. I should be feeling happy but all I do is cry.*”

Talk to someone

Don't try and fight this battle on your own. Speak to your partner or your parents and tell them how you feel. Family and friends can ease your troubles, tell you about their experiences, help you see things in a different way and offer practical help. Asking people for hands on help when you give birth is crucial.

You can also talk to your health visitor, midwife or GP. They may be able to tell you about mother and baby groups running in your area that can give you some support.

Get some sleep

Try to sleep when your baby does. You could also ask your partner, family or someone you trust to babysit for a while so you can catch up on some sleep. More information about getting a good sleep is available in our 'Sleep-how can I get some?' self help guide:

www.southwestyorkshire.nhs.uk/your-wellbeing/sleep/

If you can't sleep make sure you at least rest. You could listen to some relaxing music or learn some simple meditation techniques. Not getting enough rest can have a massive impact on the way we feel as we are more likely to be irritable, negative and feel worse in the long run.

Be compassionate with yourself

Try not to focus on getting back to what you consider an ideal weight in the weeks after you've given birth. Everyone puts on different amounts of weight throughout pregnancy and it will take everyone a different amount of time to lose it.

However it's always a good idea, under your doctors' guidance, to eat well and do some gentle exercise. Gentle exercise can benefit both a mother and baby and it's a great way to improve wellbeing.

We know that fresh air helps a baby to sleep better and releases powerful endorphins into your system, which are a natural cure for baby blues. Go for a stroll with your baby in a pram and see it as bonding time for you and your baby.

“*My list of jobs grows longer and longer and I don't feel like I have the time or energy to do them.*”

Treat yourself

It is easy as a new mum to get caught up in all the challenges of caring for a baby and forget that we have needs too. Making time and treating ourselves can help us remember who we are and uplift our mood and make us feel better.

If you can ask your partner or someone you trust to look after your baby, why not do something just for yourself? Don't let yourself feel guilty. Taking care of yourself means that you can take better care of your baby.

“*I don't feel like me anymore and I have no one to talk to.*”

Mother and baby groups

You may find it helpful to join a local mother and baby group. These groups are an opportunity to socialise and meet other mothers who are likely to be experiencing the same things you are. Talk to your GP about support groups available where you live or visit your local library which may have information about them.

If you're concerned about going on your own for the first time, ask a friend or family member to go with you.

Step three: Talk to a healthcare professional

Baby blues are very common and you should not feel ashamed to admit having these feelings to your partner, friends or family. By starting these conversations you may find out that others have experienced it too.

If you want to confide in a health care professional talk to your midwife, health visitor or GP. They will help you to find the best support.

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