



THE POSTPARTUM STRESS CENTER

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Symptoms Associated with Positive Response to Medication*

Ever wonder why some women with postpartum depression take medication and some do not? There may be any number of reasons that vary from woman to woman, but one reason may be that a certain set of symptoms are more responsive to biologic intervention than others.

The following is a list of some symptoms of postpartum depression that may prompt your therapist or doctor to recommend medication. These include symptoms that suggest that medication is likely to help you, and symptoms that are less likely to resolve with therapy alone.

1. Significant weight loss (beyond that expected after childbirth)
2. Depression worse in the morning (*diurnal variation*)
3. Agitation
4. Inability to get out of bed or sleeping all day
5. Extreme indecisiveness (e.g., it takes an hour to decide what to wear in the morning)
6. Waking often in the middle of the night, even when the baby is asleep
7. Suicidal thoughts
8. Medication helped you in the past during a similar episode
9. Clear-cut change in your personality
10. Severe irritability, with frequent loss of control over temper or outbursts at loved ones when you previously had good control
11. A blood relative of yours was helped by medication for depression
12. Panic attacks
13. Symptoms never go away—you never feel happy or take pleasure in life, all day, every day
14. Horrifying thoughts or images
15. Hallucinations or delusions

*Excerpted from *This Isn't What I Expected* by K. Kleiman & V. Raskin