

### SPEAK UP WHEN YOU'RE DOWN

Remember: PPD is treatable. With treatment, love, understanding, and support, family and friends can restore the mother's joy in her new baby.

For more information on New Jersey's "Speak Up When You're Down" campaign or to find PPD treatment and services in New Jersey, contact us at:

1-800-328-3838  
www.njspeakup.gov



## Family and Friends: A Support Network for New Mothers A Guide to Postpartum Depression (PPD)



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### WHAT IS PPD, AND WHO IS AT RISK?

Up to 80 percent of new mothers experience a range of highs and lows during pregnancy or following delivery. Usually these "baby blues" are mild and go away in about two weeks. However, some new mothers experience more than the blues. They feel a heavy sadness that doesn't go away. This is known as postpartum depression (PPD). PPD can affect women of any culture, age, income level, and race. In fact, one woman in every eight experiences PPD.

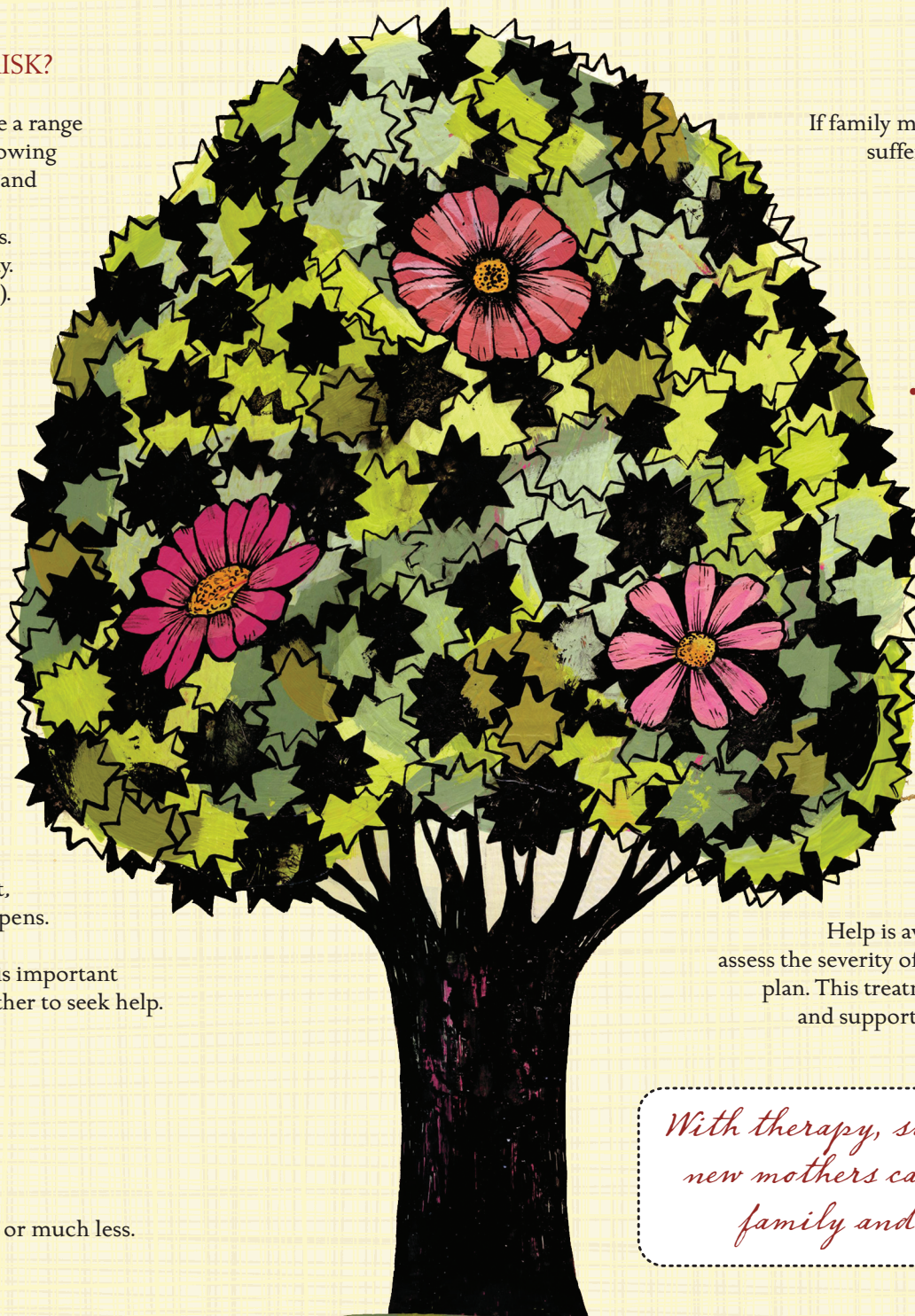
As a husband, partner, family member, or friend, you may feel confused or worried about mood changes in a woman who has had a baby or a miscarriage. Also, you may notice the change in her behavior before she does. In some cases, family members, especially husbands or partners, become depressed themselves because they are hurt by the mother's rejection. Close friends who spend a lot of time with the mother may be affected too.

The good news is that treatment for PPD is available. Family and friends can help by being patient and supportive. It is also important to know that PPD is no one's fault, and no one is 100 percent sure why PPD happens.

Remember: PPD will not last forever. But it is important to recognize the signs and urge the new mother to seek help.

Some PPD symptoms to look for include:

- Trouble sleeping, or sleeping too much.
- Lack of interest in the baby.
- Crying uncontrollably.
- Irritability or nervousness.
- Changes in appetite — eating much more or much less.
- Lack of interest in family and friends.



### TAKING ACTION AGAINST PPD

If family members or friends suspect that a woman is suffering from PPD, they need to take action to make sure that she gets the support and treatment she needs.

Remember, PPD is treatable.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Help with daily activities before she asks.
- Be alert to signs of depression that continue for more than two weeks.
- Encourage the mother to be open about her feelings.
  - Be patient and supportive.
- Ask for help from other family members and friends in caring for the baby.
- Encourage the mother to see a doctor, and support her treatment.
  - Create a safe, loving, and accepting environment.

For more information on the treatment of PPD, please contact us at 1-800-328-3838. Or visit our Web site at [www.njspeakup.gov](http://www.njspeakup.gov).

Help is available. Bring the mother to her doctor to assess the severity of her condition and to develop a treatment plan. This treatment may include counseling, medication, and support groups. Her doctor is able to recommend the treatment that is best for her.

*With therapy, support, and medicine, new mothers can overcome PPD, and family and friends can help.*