**What are normal symptoms of postpartum?**

You go through significant changes in the postpartum period. A lot of them happen naturally due to hormone changes. Symptoms can be physical, emotional or a combination of both.

**Physical symptoms**

[Physical symptoms in postpartum](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/9682-pregnancy-physical-changes-after-delivery) affect your body — things like what it does, what it looks like and how it feels. Some of the most common physical symptoms in postpartum are:

* **Soreness and pain in your perineum**: Your perineum is the space between your vagina and anus. This area stretches, and sometimes tears, during vaginal childbirth. Your entire perineal area may be sore, swollen and tender for weeks after childbirth. Sitting on a pillow, [squirting warm water](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/treatments/24137-sitz-bath) to rinse the area and using a cold sanitary pad are ways to help with this discomfort.
* **Vaginal discharge**: [Lochia](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/symptoms/22485-lochia) is the name for the vaginal bleeding you’ll have after giving birth (even if you had a C-section). It begins red and tapers off to brown before it ends as a light brown discharge. This entire process can last up to six weeks. Remember, wear a pad to catch vaginal bleeding after childbirth (no tampons).
* [**Uterus involution**](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/22655-uterus-involution): This is the medical term for your uterus shrinking back to its pre-pregnancy size. The entire process can take up to six weeks, but it begins almost immediately after your baby is born. You can also expect to feel afterbirth pains (or strong cramps) while this happens. Most of the intense pains go away after a few days, but they can also feel more intense during breastfeeding.
* **Breast engorgement and**[**nipple pain**](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/symptoms/23164-sore-nipples)**:** You can expect swollen and painful breasts for at least a few days or longer (if you breastfeed). Some people need the help of a lactation consultant to help with painful symptoms of breastfeeding like cracked nipples.
* **Sweating**: Your hormones shift dramatically almost immediately after you give birth. It’s common to sweat more, especially at night. It’s a normal symptom that should subside within a week or two.
* [**Constipation**](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/4059-constipation): Being unable to poop after childbirth is a normal symptom in the postpartum period. If you had an [epidural](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/treatments/21896-epidural), this can slow down your bowels and make it harder to poop. Sometimes, the fear of pushing to poop leads to constipation. Some healthcare providers recommend stool softeners after you give birth to help. [Hemorrhoids](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/23498-pregnancy-hemorrhoids) are also common in the postpartum period.
* **C-section recovery**: If you have stitches due to a C-section, your skin will take up to 10 days to heal. The deeper stitches can take up to 12 weeks to heal completely. Watch for signs of infection like pus seeping from the incision or having a fever.
* **Hair loss**: [Losing your hair](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/23297-postpartum-hair-loss) is a common occurrence in the postpartum period, mostly due to hormones.

**Emotional symptoms**

Emotional symptoms in the weeks and months after childbirth involve anything that affects your mind, your stress level or your body image.

* **Baby blues**: [Baby blues](https://health.clevelandclinic.org/baby-blues) is feeling sad and teary after giving birth. While these new feelings can take you by surprise, they tend to go away after a few weeks.
* **Postpartum depression**: This is a type of depression that causes extreme sadness and despair in the weeks and months after childbirth. Unlike the baby blues, this doesn’t go away and often involves treatment with medication or [behavioral therapy](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/treatments/21208-cognitive-behavioral-therapy-cbt).
* [**Postpartum anxiety**](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/22693-postpartum-anxiety): Excessive worrying that occurs after having a baby is called postpartum anxiety. It can be accompanied by physical symptoms like losing sleep or [heart palpitations](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/21677-heart-palpitations-and-anxiety). Postpartum depression and postpartum anxiety can often come together. Treatment for postpartum anxiety can also involve medication or behavioral therapy.
* **Weight loss**: Your body went through lots of changes during pregnancy and childbirth. It’s common to have loose skin and [stretch marks](https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/diseases/10785-stretch-marks), and stress about extra weight around your hips or belly. Try to relax and give yourself time to recover. You’ll lose between 10 and 20 pounds before you leave the hospital. Focus on eating nutritious foods and taking care of yourself. Remember that your body has just been through a lot.