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EMOTIONS OF A NEW MOTHER

The emotions surrounding giving birth to a new human being are extremely strong, ranging from joy to panic and despair. In addition to these emotions, the birth process itself releases a flood of hormones in the mother's body which often wreak havoc with her emotions.

Hints for Dealing with Emotions of Becoming a Mother:

- While it is easier said than done, try to prepare for the emotional effects of stress and lack of sleep--at the least make a pact with your spouse that all crying, shouting, and yelling during the first 3 months will be treated as material for stories of "how we fell apart while learning to be parents" and will be otherwise forgotten.
- Don't try to be "super mom". Some days, caring for your baby is all that you will get done.
- Take time for yourself without your baby. Hire a sitter, leave your baby with a close friend or your spouse, and get out.
- Reading is a cheap and easy way to escape.
- Keep yourself physically fit.
- Enjoy your baby! Rather than fight it, concentrate your energy and attention on nurturing that new member of your family. You can rest assured that you will soon have space for other goals in your life.
- Spend time with support groups and friends, and don't be afraid to share both your fears and your joys.
- Realize that adjustment to life as a new parent comes slowly. Have faith: millions of parents before you have managed to get their lives under control after the arrival of a new baby. You will manage quite well, too.
- If you do have prolonged feelings of depression and are not able to satisfactorily communicate them to your spouse or friends, seek professional help: a few sessions with a counselor or minister may put everything into perspective.