

# ADJUSTING TO MOTHERHOOD

## NORMAL AND EXPECTED

Being tired

Difficulty finding a comfortable position to sleep when pregnant; waking to care for baby

Being excited or worried at times

Emotions and thoughts are normal for you though, perhaps, more intense; being "moody"

Eating somewhat more or somewhat less than usual for you

Somewhat less concentration and/or some forgetfulness

Wondering what you will be like as a parent; wanting to be a "good" parent

Being scared or nervous at times

Knowing that really important changes are happening in your life

## CALL YOUR CARE PROVIDER IF YOU ARE:

*So tired you can't function; so tired you are unrefreshed by sleep*

Unable to sleep when the baby sleeps, especially when your mind is racing

Uncharacteristically angry, irritable, or overwhelmed; feelings may be experienced in "waves" or as panic attacks

Feeling like you are on an "emotional roller coaster," for no reason; emotions/thoughts increase without warning

Unable to eat, even though you know you should; or are unable to stop a significant increase in "comfort eating"

"In a fog" or unable to do normal tasks; forgetting important information, unable to make most decisions

Thinking that most other parents are better than you are; thinking you are not good enough to be a parent

Experiencing scary thoughts that are repetitive in nature; frequent nightmares

Believing that the only way to cope is to hurt yourself or to kill yourself

\* If you are having any of the experiences listed in the right-hand column, or if you are worried about someone you care about, call a health care provider right away. Remember, help is available and your symptoms CAN be treated!

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## PROACTIVE STEPS TOWARD HEALTH AND WELLBEING

### *Caring for yourself IS caring for your baby!*

#### Nutrition

Try for 5 or more healthy meals/snacks during the day.

Include 3 or more meals/snacks with protein.

Take the vitamins and supplements that are part of your daily care plan.

#### Sleep

Aim for at least 8 hours of sleep in a 24 hour period.

Talk with your care provider if sleep does not come easily to you or if your sleep is not refreshing.

Nap or rest during the day if you are tired.

#### Exercise

Identify a way to exercise that is enjoyable to you.

Find a way to stay physically active for 1/2 hour or more at least 3 times per week.

#### Social Support

Spend time each week with people who are important to you.

Consider whether family relationships are filling or draining to you.

Meet with other new parents on a regular basis. Ask your care provider for referrals in this area if you need them.

\* If these or any other areas of your life challenge your wellbeing or that of your baby, contact a professional care provider to consider new options. I am always interested in discussing your concerns.

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