

## BABY BLUES IN POSTPARTUM WOMEN: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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## INTRODUCTION

During the puerperal period, postpartum depression or the “baby blues” may appear. The “baby blues” is a mild form of depression that affects a large proportion of new mothers in the first few weeks postpartum, and is characterized by a transient physiological and psychological disorder that may have underlying symptoms of depression, tears, sadness, emotional instability, insomnia, anxiety and confusion. In this context, the exact cause of the baby blues is unclear, but the most likely reason is a sudden hormonal change after giving birth. Therefore, women who are more sensitive to hormonal changes are more likely to experience sadness than women without hormonal changes.

## OBJECTIVE

To carry out a literature review on the triggering factors and manifestations that characterize the occurrence of baby blues in postpartum women.

## METHODOLOGY

To construct the work, data obtained from research articles and literature reviews, available in databases, were used.: *PubMed* and *BMC Pregnancy and Childbirth*. In the bibliographic search, the descriptor was applied: “depression”, “pregnancy”, “puerperal disorders” taken from the Health Sciences Descriptors (DeCS). Works in Portuguese or English that addressed the baby blues as the main theme, published between 2016 and 2020, were included in the research. Exclusion criteria were studies that did not address the research topic, published before the pre-established period.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At the end of the research, 1243 works were obtained from which 10 studies were selected that met the proposed criteria. The selected studies highlight that childbirth is seen as one of the main physical, emotional and social stressors in a woman’s life. Thus, a few days or weeks after giving birth, most postpartum women suffer from some mental disorder, such as mood changes and mild depression, called “baby blues”, which is mainly characterized by feelings of sadness and tears. This change in maternal behavior and thinking is caused by several biological psychosocial factors.

Furthermore, physical and hormonal changes occur, sleep and energy are insufficient, and new roles and commitments are initiated in the care of newborns, which are a physical and emotional challenge. Some studies highlight that obstetric, psychological and social disorders are possible risk factors that can lead to the appearance of “baby blues”. Among the obstetric risk factors, cesarean section and low birth weight can be highlighted, showing that vaginal birth is a protective factor to avoid the occurrence of “baby blues”, while cesarean birth is a risk factor for the disorder due to surgical stress. Therefore, the mental health of perinatal women is affected by numerous factors, including genetic susceptibility, psychiatric history, anxious temperament, lack of family or social support, and stress in everyday life.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrated that there are several factors that trigger the baby blues and that they must be extensively studied as they affect the mother’s mood and behavior, which can directly compromise her relationship with the newborn and her partner.

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