

Partner (Module 8)

Hello. This is Dr. Martin Saint-André. Today, I'm going to talk to you about some questions you may be asking yourself as the partner of a participant in the You, Me, Baby program.

Question 1 : How important is the partner to the new baby?

Several studies show that a father or partner who is fully involved with their baby has the best chance of having a positive effect on the life of their child and their family. For example, the baby recognizes the partner's voice after birth, and studies show that a baby is able to develop different interactions and games with the mother's partner very early on. Be aware of your own importance. Be there for your baby.

Question 2: Is the partner safe from mood swings after the birth?

The answer is no. It's not uncommon for a partner to feel a certain amount of pain during pregnancy and after the birth. It can even be quite normal to feel some inner tension in the face of these big changes. What's more, studies have shown that around 10% of fathers may feel depressed during this period. Fortunately, this is not usually serious depression. The tools proposed in this program to help mothers improve their mood can also be used to help partners. If you feel that your normal functioning is disrupted, you may need personal help.

Depression can affect partners after birth. It's helpful for the couple to be able to recognize this problem and communicate well together about possible solutions.

Question 3: Why can my partner's mood be affected by the arrival of the baby?

Depression or mood changes during pregnancy and after birth can occur in up to 15 percent of women. For the mother-to-be, mood changes during the perinatal period have many causes. For example, hormones, genetics, medical aspects of pregnancy, stress and emotional management. Marital stress can also contribute to mood changes. What's more, living with depression sometimes complicates communication within the couple. As a partner, it's not always easy to get your head around this situation. This situation can make you feel powerless, cause you to blame each other, or make you want to distance yourself. Your role as a partner is important, and your simple presence can make a huge difference, even if you don't always have all the answers.

Question 4: What can I do to help my partner feel better?

Empathy and mutual compassion are important keys to improving the situation. It's important to agree to reflect, to question yourself, to communicate and eventually to adjust to the needs of your partner who's suffering. There are a number of possible solutions. First of all, you can be present and work on your own tolerance of the discomfort caused by these changes in your partner. By getting involved with the baby and the house, you can give your partner the break she needs. Relevant information is available in the Toolbox to help you better understand what you and your partner are experiencing. Remember, these conditions are treatable and, in most cases, time-limited. Finally, if your partner is experiencing more than just mood swings and the situation persists, you can help her seek help for herself.

Question 5: How do I find my place in the family as a partner?

Finding your place in the family as a partner can take some time. Either partner's mood can influence the family transition. This also includes the reaction of other children. What's more, we sometimes forget that your baby's characteristics, such as health and temperament, will also influence what you

experience with each other. In the face of all these changes, your partner may feel excluded by the close proximity between mother and baby. Expectations of each other can be intense. These changes are both exciting and sometimes a little difficult. Birth is a great opportunity to cultivate your patience and kindness, tap into your inner wisdom, learn to find new words and assert yourself. Don't hesitate to take your place. You're okay just the way you are. Becoming a parent involves big changes. Don't be afraid to experiment, don't be afraid to dare. This is a great opportunity to work on becoming the parent you want to be.

We wish you every success in your learning in the toi, Moi, bébé program.