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POST-NUPTIAL BLUES

After the stress and excitement of planning and executing a wedding is over, many women often fall into a state of depression. Many brides experience significant sadness days or even weeks after their big day. This increasingly common condition leaves sufferers feeling disappointed, confused and even questioning their recent I do's. Psychiatrist Dr. Terry Eagan sits down with Sheknows to explain why newlyweds face depression after the wedding is over.



SheKnows: What are some indications of post-wedding depression?

Eagan: Irritability, restlessness, sadness, worry about having made a terrible mistake by getting married, boredom, arguing with your spouse over "small things" and decreased sexual activity, to name a few.

SheKnows: What are some of the most common reasons for post-nuptial depression?

Eagan: Most couples often have unreasonable expectations about what it was going to feel like being married. They imagine a life without any problems or any arguments. Newlyweds also often place too much pressure on their spouse to be "all things". Cutting off friends and family, overspending on the wedding and unclear plans regarding financial plans are some common reasons.

SheKnows: Why do newlyweds get depressed after the wedding is over instead of becoming excited at the prospect of starting a new life with the person they love?

Eagan: I think the reality of waking up with the same person for the rest of their lives hits them. Factors such as no other sexual partners, differing attitudes regarding time management, financial concerns, sexual expectations and other small habits begin to annoy each other.

SheKnows: Please provide some statistics on the number of people or couples that experience post-nuptial depression.

Eagan: There are no statistics that I am aware of in this regard. Keep in mind, the majority of couples get through this time just fine. Only when one or both come to therapy do we really know the extent of this phenomenon. Certainly, most couples' therapists have dealt with this issue in their practice not infrequently.

SheKnows: What are some ways to overcome this depression?

Eagan: For most couples, this will pass in a couple of months if left alone. If the problems persist beyond a few months, or appear to be getting worse, I encourage the couple to speak to a professional.

SheKnows: What are some tips for a successful first few years of marriage?

Eagan: Communicate, communicate, communicate!! Talk about how you feel and remind yourselves why you got married and why you chose the partner you chose. Have very frank conversations regarding money, sex and expectations about everything else such as extended family, time management, etc. Don't forget to stay connected to your friends and family; don't rely on your partner to provide for all of your emotional needs. Be generous, be loving—be the partner you would want. Say sorry and tell your partner you love them often. Be grateful for all of your blessings and continue to stay involved in the charitable activities you enjoy—charity says much about your character and reminds you of all you have to be thankful for.