

Background



- Postpartum Depression (PPD) is a major depressive episode as defined by DSM-5 criteria with onset during pregnancy or within 1 year after birth.
- One of the most common complications of child bearing
- Symptoms: anxiety, irritability, loss of interest and energy

Epidemiology

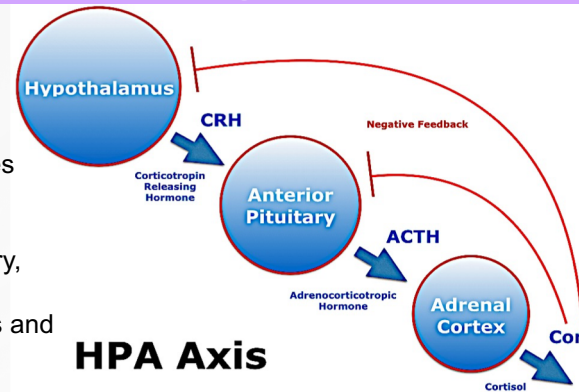


- Prevalence varies by state and can be as high as 1 in 5 women.
- Affects women of all racial and ethnic backgrounds
- Highest incidence in American Indian/Alaska natives; Asians and Pacific Islanders at lowest risk



Pathophysiology

- Specific pathogenesis of PPD is unknown
- Possible cause:
 - ❖ Rapid decline in reproductive hormones following delivery
 - ❖ Impairment of the hypothalamus, pituitary, adrenal axis (HPA) associated with stress and age



Risk Factors

- Strongest: history of untreated anxiety before or during pregnancy
- Age over 30
- Genetic factors
- Social factors: Low social support, marital difficulties, stressful life events, and unplanned pregnancy
- Psychological, physical or sexual abuse
- Poor physical health/body image
- Perinatal complications, preterm birth, and infant health conditions

Diagnosis and Screening

- 10 item Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale
- Careful history taking
 - ❖ Ask women about social support, substance abuse, violence regarding intimate partner
- Rule out bipolar disorder because treatment with antidepressants alone may worsen bipolar disorder
- Labs: hemoglobin and TSH levels

Treatment

- Psychosocial strategies if mild: peer support and nondirective counseling
- Psychological therapy if moderate: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- Pharmacological therapy if severe or refractory to above: SSRI antidepressants are the first line choice



Prevention

Screen for signs of depression before, during, and after pregnancy, as well as at the first few well baby visits

References

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The EPDS is a 10-item questionnaire. Women are asked to answer each question in terms of the past seven days.

1. I have been able to laugh and see the funny side of things	As much as I always could (score of 0) Rather less than I used to (score of 1) Definitely not as much as now (score of 2) Hardly at all (score of 3)
2. I have looked forward with enjoyment to things	As much as I ever did (score of 0) Rather less than I used to (score of 1) Definitely less than I used to (score of 2) Hardly at all (score of 3)
3. I have blamed myself unnecessarily when things went wrong	Yes, most of the time (score of 3) Yes, some of the time (score of 2) Not very often (score of 1) No, never (score of 0)
4. I have been anxious or worried for no good reason	No, not at all (score of 0) Hardly ever (score of 1) Yes, sometimes (score of 2) Yes, very often (score of 3)
5. I have felt scared or panicky for no good reason	Yes, quite a lot (score of 3) Yes, sometimes (score of 2) No, not much (score of 1) No, not at all (score of 0)
6. Things have been getting on top of me	Yes, most of the time I haven't been able to cope at all (score of 3) Yes, sometimes I haven't been coping as well as usual (score of 2) No, most of the time I have coped quite well (score of 1) No, I have been coping as well as ever (score of 0)
7. I have been so unhappy that I have had difficulty sleeping	Yes, most of the time (score of 3) Yes, quite often (score of 2) Not very often (score of 1) No, not at all (score of 0)
8. I have felt sad or miserable	Yes, most of the time (score of 3) Yes, quite often (score of 2) Not very often (score of 1) No, not at all (score of 0)
9. I have been so unhappy that I have been crying	Yes, most of the time (score of 3) Yes, quite often (score of 2) Only occasionally (score of 1) No, never (score of 0)
10. The thought of harming myself has occurred to me	Yes, quite often (score of 3) Sometimes (score of 2) Hardly ever (score of 1) Never (score of 0)

Score: 0-8 • Low Probability

Score: 8-12 • Baby Blues
• Tx: Close follow-up; usually resolves within 2 weeks

Score: 13+ • Possible PPD
• Use DSM-5 criteria to diagnose