Trajectories, Predictors, and Consequences of Depression Around Pregnancy Among Cigarette Smokers

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Background
- Depression is defined as a sustained low mood or loss of interest in pleasurable activities for at least two weeks.
- Depression is commonly undiagnosed in pregnant women. This is due to the symptoms of depression being mistaken as natural experiences associated with pregnancy such as change in sleep patterns, energy levels, and appetite. Approximately 12-15% of women have a period of depression at some point during their pregnancy or in postpartum.
- It has been proven in multiple studies that untreated depression during pregnancy can lead to preterm birth, low birth weight, poor cognitive development and emotional difficulties in early childhood.
- Postpartum depression is also associated with increased likelihood of behavioral and cognitive issues due to the lack of mother-infant bonding. Depression in postpartum may limit infant sleep and shorten the duration of breastfeeding, which can lead to various health problems.

Objectives
1. To examine the prevalence of maternal depression during pregnancy, and the changes in maternal depressive mood during postpartum
2. To identify significant predictors of maternal depression such as age, cigarette use, race, partner and social support, infant sleep and crying.
3. To determine if maternal depression impacts infant growth and health
4. To identify potential mediators through which depression affects infant growth health, such as breastfeeding practices and child care.

Methods (cont.)
Pretest:
- 56 patients completed a survey and reported their depression diagnosis
- Patients also completed a Beck Depression Inventory to determine the severity of their depression during pregnancy
Postpartum:
- 14 patients completed monthly surveys regarding infant information
- Patients also completed an Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale to determine severity of postpartum depression

Results (cont.)

Conclusions
- Significant Maternal Depression Predictors Included:
  - Mothers age 29 and younger
  - Heavy smoker
  - Non-Hispanic Caucasian
  - Low/moderate partner support
  - Low/moderate family support
  - Previous diagnosis of depression

Postpartum depression scores decreased overall as time passed, except for month 5
- Mothers with depression had less intention to breastfeed
- Infant sleep had no significant effect on maternal depression

References

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