
Perinatal Depression

Infant Feeding and Prenatal Classes

Who WIC Participants

Why WIC

Time 5-10 minutes (without DVD)

Setup Chairs in clusters of 2 or 3. White board and pens
(Longer Class) DVD “Healthy Mom, Happy Family”

Objectives By the end of this session, participants will:

- Understand the term “Perinatal Depression”
- Describe the types and symptoms of Perinatal depression which are prenatal depression, post partum blues, postpartum depression and post partum psychosis
- Discuss the causes of Perinatal Depression
- Identify 2 places to go for help for Perinatal Depression

**Lesson
Overview**

- 1. Introduction—What is Perinatal Depression?**
- 2. Types and Symptoms of Perinatal Depression, Postpartum Blues, Postpartum Depression and Psychosis.**
- 3. Causes of Perinatal Depression**
- 4. Resources: Where to go for help for perinatal depression.**

Introduction Good morning (afternoon). Welcome to the WIC class. My name is _____.

When people go through major changes in life, like pregnancy and giving birth, it is not uncommon to feel overwhelmed or down. Sometimes it is very difficult to admit you are feeling down, when you think you *should* feel happy. Today we are going to talk about feelings you or your friends or family may experience in pregnancy or as a mom.

We are going to use the term “**Perinatal**” to describe the time of pregnancy through the first year postpartum.

1. Definition of Perinatal Depression

What is Perinatal Depression?

“**Perinatal Depression**” is a term used to describe a wide range of mood problems and feelings that may trouble a woman during her **pregnancy** and **after birth**.

2. Symptoms of Perinatal Depression

Does anyone know of anyone that has had “the blues” or down during their pregnancy or after having their baby? Talk with your partner about your own experience or someone you knew.

What were their symptoms?
Discuss and write down
Summarize, and then compare answers to handout.

Go over handout/chart:

Symptoms of Perinatal Depression:

Feelings like...

Not feeling like yourself
Gloomy most of the time, unable to laugh or enjoy things
Withdrawal from friends and family (not returning phone calls, texts or email)
Very worried all the time
Repeating behaviors like checking doors, washing hands constantly
Foggy (not able to think clearly or make decisions)
Overwhelmed and not able to cope
Crying
Tired
Not wanting to get dressed or take care of yourself
Restless, angry or irritable
Low self esteem
Feeling Worthless or guilty
Overly worried or not concerned at all about the baby

Or Having....

Little interest in doing things that you enjoy
Sleep problems (sleeping too much or unable to fall or stay sleep)
Sudden mood swings
A change in appetite, either overeating or not eating
Headaches, chest pains, shortness of breath, rapid heartbeat, numbness, panic, unusual thoughts
Worrying about something all the time or activities like counting or washing hands over and over.

Some Rare symptoms (that need immediate help) are
Thoughts of hurting yourself or the baby, strange visions or voices.

Types of Perinatal Depression

Depression affects 15-20% of all Pregnant women. That is 1 out of every five women! Some women stop depression or other medication during pregnancy and become ill again. This can affect a woman's ability to take good care of herself and the growing baby.

Postpartum "Baby" Blues is very common and is normal. About 80% of women experience some of these symptoms after birth. "Baby Blues" starts within a few days of birth and will go away within 2 weeks. If the feelings do not go away or get worse, it is perinatal (postpartum) **depression**.

Perinatal (postpartum) depression and anxiety affects 15-20% of new moms. It can negatively affect not only the mom but also the baby and the whole family. It can start slowly or suddenly. It usually does not get better or go away without some kind of help. Perinatal depression can continue for years. With help, it gets better. Talk to the doctor about treatment options, there are lots of different things that help. You can call the numbers we have on the resource list for help. Men also get depressed around a birth. About 10% of new fathers show signs of depression after the birth of a baby.

Postpartum psychosis is a rare condition, affecting 1-2 per 1000 women. This is very serious, and needs IMMEDIATE hospitalization. The women suffering from this condition can be harmful to themselves or their children. They hear voices or see things that are not there. Women with a history of bipolar disease are more at risk.

Causes of Perinatal Depression

What causes Perinatal Depression?

IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT. It can be hormonal changes, lack of sleep, it can be because of a difficult situation, it can be just an adjustment to a big change in life. It can be that you had expectations of what having a baby that did not turn out the way you planned. Domestic violence, drug or alcohol use, genetics and or a history of mental illness can all be risk factors.

Longer class

Watch DVD "Healthy Mom, Happy Family"

Get Help for Perinatal Depression

Perinatal Depression can hurt families. Children of depressed moms cry more, and have more problems in school.

If you are feeling down, there is hope. Call one of the numbers on the resource list. You do not have to suffer anymore. You can get better. If you know of a friend suffering, be there for her. When you have a baby, it is a good idea to be a part of a community.

Prevent or help depression

What are some ways to prevent depression or help it? Ask group.

What can you do to help yourself or others prevent or help recovery from depression? Find people who will be understanding and helpful.

Talk with you doctor.

Join a church or other community group.

Eat healthy food, avoid junk food

Avoid alcohol and drugs

**Prevent
or help
depression
(continued)**

Get physical activity every day.
Talk with friends and family every day.
Join a moms and me group
Spend a little “me” time—taking a bath, etc.
Ask for help with the baby, housework.
Get help/stop using any drugs or alcohol or tobacco.

Closing

If you feel you have symptoms of Perinatal Depression, ask for a brochure or screening tool. We have referrals to help you feel better. Please see me after class. There is hope. With treatment you can feel better.

Thanks for coming. Please share this information with a friend or family member, if they need help. Be sure to get help if you need it.