Addressing Stigma by Increasing Awareness of Postpartum Depression

Niharika Vedherey

Thomas Jefferson College of Population Health
Master of Public Health
Capstone Presentation
Mentor: Dr. Frasso
November 16, 2018
Postpartum Depression

• Depression suffered by new mothers
• All new mothers are at risk
• Risk is higher among mothers:
  • increased stress
  • decreased support
  • previous mood disorders
  • low socioeconomic status
• Less than 10% of women with postpartum depression receive treatment

(APA,NIMH)
Public Health Issue

• Affects 1 in 7 mothers

• Barriers
  • Screening
  • Diagnosis
  • Treatment
  • Stigma

  Not Uniformly Addressed

• Impacts both mother and child
  • Mental health
  • Growth and development
Methods: Study Design

- Comprehensive Literature Review
  - Search
    - PubMed, Google Scholar, Scopus
    - Journal of Maternal and Child Health
    - International Journal of Women’s Health
  - Organizations
    - WHO
    - APA
    - CDC
    - ACOG
    - NIH
    - USDHHS

Search Terms:
- breastfeeding
- postpartum depression
- maternal health
- child health
- screening diagnosis
- treatment stigma
Accessed for “postpartum depression” (n=80)

30 papers eligible for inclusion (n=30)

Papers included in review (n=25)

Excluded based on not relating to focus areas (n=50)

Excluded based on publishing year before 2000 (n=5)

Review of abstract, keywords: breastfeeding, maternal health, child health, screening, diagnosis, treatment, stigma
Highlights from My Review

- Breastfeeding
- Maternal Health
- Child Health
- Screening
- Diagnosis
- Treatment
- Stigma
Results: Breastfeeding

- Breastfeeding
  - PPD mothers have high rates of early cessation or no initiation
  - Decreased bonding with infant
  - Increased inflammatory response
Results: Maternal and Child Health

- **Maternal Health**
  - Increased diagnosis of major depressive disorder
  - Reduced ability to continue daily activities
  - Risky behavior (smoking, drinking, etc.)
  - Strain on mother-infant relationship/bonding

- **Child Health**
  - Detached from mother (during feeding and otherwise)
  - Increased risk of developmental issues
    - Behavioral: aggression, avoidant, attention-seeking, social
    - Psychological: depression, anxiety
Results:
Screening/Diagnosis, & Treatment

- **Screening/Diagnosis**
  - Common tools:
    - Postpartum Depression Screening Scale (PDSS)
    - Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9)
    - Edinburg Postpartum Depression Scale (EPDS)
  - Pediatricians and OBGYNs should screen and facilitate treatment

- **Treatment**
  - Therapy and counseling
  - Medications
  - Emotional and practical support
Results: Stigma

- Stigma
  - Low care seeking rates for mental health assistance
    - Negative light in front of family, friends, peers
  - Low rates of accepting symptoms
    - Normal to feel this way after delivery
    - Attention on baby, not self-care
  - Increased shame/guilt
    - Inability to help baby, don’t want to highlight issue
  - Mistrust in medical system
Infographics

• Serve as a part of an awareness campaign
  • Increase knowledge of postpartum depression
  • **Normalize** talking about postpartum depression in all settings

• Infographics:
  1. Questions to Ask Your Doctor Before Delivery
  2. What are the Symptoms
  3. Postpartum Depression is Treatable
  4. Normalizing Postpartum Depression
Take Away

• There are more than 4 million births a year in the United States
  • Nearly 1 in 7 women suffer from postpartum depression
  • Postpartum depression can be PREVENTED and TREATED

Let’s **TALK** more and help women and their children!