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Postpartum Depression and Postpartum Blues

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Definitions

- **“Postpartum blues”** (PPB): mild depression commonly experienced short time after birth also named “baby blues” or “maternity blues”
- **“Postpartum depression”** (PPD): longer and more severe form of “postpartum blues”

Importance

- 50-80% of women affected by PPB
- 10% of women affected by PPD
- Widespread in western countries
- Cultural differences in causes and evolution
- Relatively long duration (several months up to few years for PPD)
- Causes insufficiently known

Risk Factors and Symptoms

Risk Factors	Symptoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Marital problems• Depression during pregnancy• Insufficient or no social support• Stress or negative life events during pregnancy• Traumatic birth experiences• Early hospital discharge• History of severe premenstrual syndrome	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fatigue, exhaustion• Sadness• Difficulty in sleeping• Appetite disorders• Anxiety, fear• Inability to cope with daily problems• Unrealistic concern for the baby• Thoughts of harming oneself or the baby

Results of the Pilot Study

- **Design**: questionnaire administered on a sample of 25 mothers
- **Hypothesis**: There is an association between the modern environment (evolutionary new) surrounding the parturient and the postpartum affective disorders.

Results of the Pilot Study (Continued)

- **Risk factors**: parity, education, incubation, urban/rural background, family attitude, child's health, pregnancy problems, delivery method, previous affective problems, marital status, place of giving birth etc.
- **Results**: OR = 1.33 (weak association)
- **Conclusion**: necessity for more research on large samples