

[IMAGE]

Depression: Not Just for New Moms

By Editorial Staff

Think depression is only for new moms? Think again. It's well-established that women can experience pre- and post-partum depression (before and after the birth of their child), characterized by symptoms including feelings of sadness and hopelessness; under- or over-eating; lacking energy or motivation; withdrawal from friends and family; headaches, stomach aches and other unexplained pain; and other manifestations.

Research suggests hormone changes during and after pregnancy may contribute to depressive symptoms during this time. But men, too?

According to a study published in *JAMA Psychiatry*, a peer-reviewed research journal of the American Medical Association, men are also at risk for depression before and after the birth of their child. Among more than 3,000 men surveyed while their partner was pregnant and again nine months after their child's birth, a small percentage of fathers experienced prenatal depression symptoms, while double that amount experienced postnatal symptoms.

It's important to note that according to the study, a history of depression and social / relationship dysfunction were associated with depression risk, suggesting men already at risk for depression are more likely to experience it before and after the birth of their child.

The takeaway: Depression is a possibility for expectant mothers and fathers, so if you've got a little one on the way (or he/she has already arrived), both parents should talk to their doctor about any feelings of depression they may be experiencing. Your doctor can evaluate your symptoms and help find a solution (hopefully a nonpharmaceutical one) that let's you enjoy your new bundle of joy and one another.

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