

# My Sister's Voice: Postpartum Psychosis and Postpartum Depression are Real

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# Goal

Empower parents and the community to improve the lives of their families by addressing maternal mental health and parenting with psychiatric disabilities.



# Objectives

- Perinatal Depression Treatment: Medical, Therapeutic, Social Support
- Tips for Providing Support: Mothering the Mother, Steps to Wellness
- Prevention and Intervention Strategies
- Community Support





# Postpartum Support International's Needs of Childbearing Women

- A companion or advocate to provide support during pregnancy, birth, and the first year postpartum
- Supportive professionals who are knowledgeable about mental health and will access help for a patient with a mood disorder
- Having a time and place to talk about the pregnancy, the birth, and the continuing postpartum experience



# Motherhood myths

- Pregnancy is a universally glowing, happy time
- Parenthood is always “the most wonderful time in your life”
- Super Mom, Super Wife
- Birthing, bonding and parenting all come naturally
- Babies sleep all the time
- Partner will help more when baby is here



# Cultural Factors Affecting Health Care For Mothers

- Rituals, practices, and beliefs during pregnancy, labor, and postpartum
- “Forty Days”
- Mental illness is fault of woman
- Home remedy “treatment” for postpartum depression/psychosis



# Critical Components to Recovery:

What Women Need Medically, Mentally and Emotionally for Optimum Recovery

- 1) Medical intervention
- 2) Therapeutic intervention
- 3) Support of others



# Therapeutic Intervention

- Crisis Intervention Model
- Psycho-education to destigmatize and teach about Postpartum Mood Disorders
- More directive (giving clear cut plans and steps to wellness)
- Family involvement, especially father
- Development of more effective coping skills
- Increase social support
- Focus on parenting skills, as needed



# Social Support Intervention

- Family and Friends
- Peer Support Groups
- Faith Communities
- Telephone Support
- Emotional and Practical Support
  - Including Birthing and Postpartum Doulas



# Role of Fathers

- Issue of their own mental health
- Emotional and practical Support
- Prevention
- Early detection
- Key role in treatment
- Importance of involvement (including child abuse prevention)
- Fostering supportive nurturing role in men and boys



# Tips for providing PPD support

- Be comfortable with discussing mental illness  
(What to say and what not to say)
- Provide active, non-judgemental listening
- Offer accurate written materials and up-to-date resources
- Follow-up to know that the woman and her family's needs have been met
- Know your facts. Be current with information.



# Tips for Providing PPD Support

PSI's Universal Message:

I am not alone.

I am not to blame.

I am feeling better and getting well.



# Mothering the Mother

PSI's Steps to Wellness:

Education/Treatment

Sleep

Nutrition

Exercise

Sharing with others who are

non-judgemental

Asking for help and Accepting help



# Strategies for Prevention and Intervention

- Education of patient and support system (family and professionals)
- Continuity of healthcare
- Social support is critical. Isolation can be devastating.
- Realistic preparation for parenthood
- Plan of action for the family
- Referral to additional resources



# Strategies to Increase Diagnosis

- Education – Preconception, pregnancy, postpartum
- Obstetrical and midwifery risk assessment  
(Pregnancy is the window of opportunity for prevention, very early detection and intervention and referral to treatment)
- Pediatricians can and should screen new mothers for PPD
- Be informed and involved with local resource and referral system for pregnant and postpartum families.



# Perinatal Mental Health Screening

## Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)

Perinatal Mental Health: A Guide to the Edinburgh  
Postnatal Depression Scale

John Cox and Jeni Holden



# Perinatal Mental Health Screening

Postpartum Depression Screening Scale  
by Beck and Gambil  
Western Psychological Services



# Improving Maternal Mental Health in Your Community

- All women of childbearing age must know personal and family's mental health history and share with caregivers
- Accurate assessment by caregivers of women's mental health to be completed at every visit during pregnancy and first year postpartum
- All health professionals must provide in their offices written educational information, resources and treatment options



# Improving Maternal Mental Health in Your Community Resources

- Continuity of healthcare for women and their families must be available in every community
- Timely and appropriate referral to other professionals must include follow-up by the referring parties to insure quality of healthcare

Source: Minimizing Postpartum Depression Through Social Support  
Postpartum Support International, 2003



The Postpartum Resource Center of New York, Inc.

# Postpartum Support International

- 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference
- June 7-10, 2006
- (Including perinatal depression training – postpartum depression training June 7 & 8, 2006)
  
- The Hyatt Regency
- Jersey City, New Jersey

# Vision

A Postpartum Parent Support Network in every community.



The Postpartum Resource Center of New York, Inc.

# Contact Information

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