Postpartum Depression In Asian American Mothers

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Objectives

- Describe common postpartum affective mood disorders
- Discuss risks of undetected and untreated postpartum depression
- Discuss research regarding postpartum depression among Asian American mothers
- Discuss clinical implications of the findings
Historical Perspective

In 1893, the term “lactational insanity” was coined to connect a women’s emotional rollercoaster after childbirth to increases in the hormone prolactin.

(Rohe, 1996)
Why Screen for Depression?

- Women 2x at risk for depression
- Increased risk in childbearing women
- Affects maternal-child bond, infant development, & the family
- Increased risk of recurrent psychiatric illness, suicide, and infanticide
- Easily treated if diagnosed
- Many women “suffer in silence”
- Unique access to this population

Postpartum Mood Disorders

- Antenatal Depression
- Postpartum Blues
- Postpartum Depression
- Postpartum Psychosis
- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder
Antenatal Depression

- Prevalence 39 - 50%
- May continue through the postpartum period
- Depression at 18 weeks, 3 x risk of PPD
- Depression at 32 weeks, 6 x risk of PPD

(Austin, 2004; Chaudron, 2003; Cohen & Nonacs, 2005)
Postpartum “baby” Blues

- 30 - 80% of all postpartum women
- Onset 4 - 5 days after delivery
- Resolve 10 -15 days postpartum
- Transient in nature
- Self-limiting

(Beck, Reynolds, & Rutowski, 1992; Wood, Thomas, Droppleman, & Meighan, 1997)
Baby Blues: Clinical Manifestations

- Mood swings
- Anxiety
- Sadness
- Irritability
- Crying
- Decreased concentration
- Trouble sleeping
When to Refer your Patient with the Blues?

- Severity
- Timing
- Duration
Postpartum Psychosis

- Rare, 1-2 in 1,000 women
- Increased risk in first-time mothers
- Sudden onset 48 - 72 hours
- Medical emergency
- Psychiatric referral & hospitalization

(Agrawal et al., 1997; Gale & Harlow, 2003; Kendell et al., 1987; Sichel, 2000)
Postpartum Psychosis: Clinical Manifestations

- Labile Mood
- Euphoria
- Confusion
- Disorganization
- Delusions
- Hallucinations
- Suicidal ideation
- Harm to others
- Insomnia

(Doucet, Dennis, Letourneau, & Blackmore, 2009; Sharma & Mazmanian, 2003)
Postpartum Depression

- Most common postpartum disorder
- 21% of all postpartum mothers in the U. S.
- 55% of women in diverse cultures
- 26 - 32% in teens
- Easily identified and treated
- 50% of mothers go undiagnosed

(http://www.wellpostpartum.com/resources/articles)

(APA, 1994; Gjerdingen, 2007; Goodman, 2004; Goyal, Murphy, & Cohen 2006; Lee et al., 2001; Sichel & Driscoll, 2002; The Marcé Society, 2006; Wisner et al. 2013)
Risk Factors for Developing PPD

- Psychiatric history
- Maternal age
- Hormonal Changes
- Sleep disturbance
- Sleep fragmentation
- Socioeconomic status
- Social support
- Stressful life events
- Infant crying
Identifying Depressive Symptoms

- Sleep changes
- Interests
- Guilt
- Energy
- Concentration
- Affect
- Appetite
- Psychomotor agitation
- Suicide
- Somatic
Symptoms in Practice

Review of 133 women:

1. “felt really overwhelmed”
2. “felt like my emotions were on a rollercoaster”
3. “have been very irritable”
4. “felt all alone”
5. “felt like I wasn’t normal”

(Beck & Indman, 2005)
Risks of Untreated PPD

- If left untreated ......
  - Maternal-child bond
  - Cognitive development
  - Child readiness for school
  - Family functioning
  - Withdrawal from family and friends
  - Thoughts of harming self/infant

Asian Americans
Distribution of U.S. Population by Race/Ethnicity, 2010

- White, Non-Hispanic: 64%
- Hispanic: 16%
- Black, Non-Hispanic: 12%
- American Indian/Alaska Native: 1%
- Asian: 5%
- Some Other Race: 0.2%
- Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander: 0.2%
- Two or More Races: 2%

Total U.S. Population = 308.7 million

SOURCE: 2010 U.S. Census
U.S. Asian Population: 2010 Census

- = 3,000 residents
Asian American Population

- 5% U. S. Population
- 13% California Population
- 7% Monterey County
- 14% Los Angeles County
- 31% Santa Clara County
- 34% San Francisco County
Santa Clara County

- Asian Indian: 4%
- Chinese: 14%
- Filipino: 7%
- Japanese: 4%
- Korean: 12%
- Vietnamese: 24%
- Other Asians: 35%
Asian Americans & Mental Health

- More likely to have access healthcare services
- *Less likely* to seek mental health care

(Kaiser Family Foundation, 2009; Ta & Colleagues, 2010)
Disparities in PPD Identification

- Few studies include Asian Americans
- 8 studies to date in U. S.
- Studies in Asian countries of origin suggest PPD rates 17 – 33%
- Rates vary due to differing methods, study samples, and specific Asian subgroups studied
- Depression stigmatized in Asian cultures

(Klainin & Arthur, 2009; Teng et al. 2007)
“in some Asian cultures....if word got out [that the immigrant woman suffers from depression], the stigma spreads to all the relatives...sisters back in the home country would be labeled as at risk for madness, and would have difficulty finding suitors”

(Teng et al. 2007)
Asian Americans & PPD Research

Asian American Communities and Health

Context, Research, Policy, and Action

SAVE THE DATE

The first undergraduate research forum on Asian American studies

Faces of Asian America

The Asian American Studies Program at the University of Pennsylvania would like to invite you to:

FACES OF ASIAN AMERICA: THE FIRST UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH FORUM ON ASIAN AMERICAN STUDIES on March 17, 2012

rsvp: Faces of Asian America
questions: upennasam@gmail.com
info: asam.sas.upenn.edu

The Research Forum is a scholarly exploration of the issues surrounding the Asian American experience with the goal of promoting a more profound understanding of Asian America. The conference welcomes students, professors, and professionals to discuss areas of research important to our community. Themes that will be considered are Race and Ethnicity, Activism and Representation, and The “Model Minority” and the “Other Asians.”
Clinically Identified Postpartum Depression in Asian American Mothers

(Goyal et al. 2012, JOGNN)
Purpose

- Identify diagnosis rate of PPD in Asian American mothers (*Asian Indian, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese*) compared with Non-Hispanic White (NHW) mothers
- Identify differences in diagnosis rates among the six Asian subgroups

(Goyal et al. 2012, JOGNN)
Methods

- Electronic medical records
- Women aged 18–45 years
- Single live birth
- Self-reported race/ethnicity

11,637 Deliveries

8,787 NHW & Asians 18-45

7,952 Met Study Criteria

523 PPD Cases Identified

Age <18 or >45 Other Race/Ethnicity

Multiple Deliveries or Not Single Live Birth
PPD Identification

- 523 cases
- 41% ICD-9 code
- 49% ICD-9 code & medication use
- 10% medication use alone
Results - Race/Ethnicity

N = 7,952

NHW 59%
Asian 41%

Asian Indian 16%
Chinese 15%
Filipino 4%
Japanese 2%
Korean 2%
Vietnamese 2%
Demographics

- Age 33.5(4) years
- 82% married
- 50% male Infants
- 68% vaginal delivery

www.telegraph.co.uk
Results

Asian American mothers significantly less likely to receive a diagnosis of PPD compared with Non-Hispanic White mothers

(Goyal et al. 2012, JOGNN)
Implications

- Risk for underreporting PPD symptoms
- Risk of being underdiagnosed with PPD
- PPD screening for all new mothers through 12 months postpartum
- Well baby visits
Limitations

- Single center study
- Limited by medical record data
- No measure of socioeconomic status
- No measure of acculturation
Future Research

- Larger Asian American samples
- Disaggregate Asian subgroups
- Include biological and psychosocial variables e.g. infant gender, acculturation, social support
- Qualitative studies
Qualitative Studies in Asian American Mothers
Purpose

- Explore perceptions of mental health and help-seeking among Asian Indian, Chinese, and Vietnamese mothers living in Northern California
Methods

- **Design:** Mixed methods
- **Sample:**
  - Convenience, snow-ball sampling
  - Asian mothers, 18 years or older
  - Single live birth within past 12 months
Quantitative Data

• Demographic information
• 10-item, Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Screening Scale (EPDS)
• Score 0-30
• $\geq 10$ risk for developing PPD
Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)

Name: Maria
Your Date of Birth: February 26, 1985
Baby’s Date of Birth: 32 weeks pregnant
Address: 
Phone: 

As you are pregnant or have recently had a baby, we would like to know how you are feeling. Please check the answer that comes closest to how you have felt IN THE PAST 7 DAYS, not just how you feel today.

Here is an example, already completed.

I have felt happy:
- Yes, all the time
- Yes, most of the time
- No, not very often
- No, not at all

This would mean: “I have felt happy most of the time” during the past week.

Please complete the other questions in the same way.

In the past 7 days:

1. I have been able to laugh and see the funny side of things
- As much as I always could
- Not quite so much now
- Definitely not so much now
- Not at all

2. I have looked forward with enjoyment to things
- As much as I ever did
- Rather less than I used to
- Definitely less than I used to
- Hardly at all

*6. Things have been getting on top of me
- Yes, most of the time
- Sometimes
- No, not very often
- No, not at all

*7. I have been so unhappy that I have had difficulty sleeping
- Yes, most of the time
- Sometimes
- Not very often
- No, not at all

*8. I have felt sad or miserable
- Yes, most of the time
- Sometimes
- Not very often
- No, not at all

*9. I have been so unhappy that I have been crying
- Yes, most of the time
- Sometimes
- Only occasionally
- No, never

10. The thought of harming myself has occurred to me
- Yes, quite often
- Sometimes
- Hardly ever
- Never

Score = 16
Qualitative Data

• Semi-structured interviews
• 1 hour

Examples of questions:
• “What would you do if you felt sad/depressed”
• “Would you seek help”
• “What do your family and friends think about sadness/depression”
Results - Asian Indian Mothers

- N = 12
- Age 33(3.4) years
- All married
- 83% (n=10) mothers born in India
- 66.7% (n=8) vaginal delivery
- 66.7 % (n=8) male Infants
- 7(4) months postpartum
- Interviews conducted in English

(Goyal & Ta unpublished data)
Results - Depressive Symptoms

- Mean EPDS Score 6.4(4.0)
- 16.7% (n=2) scored ≥ 10
Results - Asian Indian Mothers

- More likely to talk to spouse and family
- Preferred other methods e.g. complementary and alternative medicine
- Would seek professional help as a last resort
- Many reported cultural barriers to help-seeking such as stigma

(Goyal & Ta unpublished data)
“I think friends, if they are, you know, my age group, I think they do understand that you need to be treated in the right way. But, I think, if it's a senior family member, they would just shun it and they would say, oh, there's nothing wrong with you.”
“If I were getting a treatment, I would feel as if I have failed.”
Results - Chinese Mothers

- N = 15
- Age 33(3.1) years
- All married
- Majority born in China or Taiwan
- 20% (n=2) Cesarean section delivery
- 75% (n=9) female infants
- 8(4.5) months postpartum

(Goyal & Ta unpublished data)
Results - Chinese Mothers

- Mean EPDS Score 5.6 (3.2)
- 20% (n=3) scored ≥ 10
“I think that -- like, my mom would say that, you know, this person is just kind of, like, feeling sorry for themselves, you know, that it's something that they can control, but they don't want to.”
Results - Vietnamese Mothers

- N = 15
- Age 32.3(4.3) years
- All married
- 20% Cesarean rate
- 40% female infants
- 7.7(3.5) months postpartum
- 93% mothers born in Vietnam
- 47% interviews conducted in Vietnamese

(Ta & Goyal unpublished data)
Results - Vietnamese Mothers

- Mean EPDS Score 7.2(5.4)
- 33.3% (n=5) scored ≥ 10
Results - Vietnamese Mothers

- Postpartum traditions played important roles in their well-being as well as maintaining strong cultural values.
- Many reported feelings of isolation and desiring experiencing postpartum traditions more frequently.
- PPD is not understood/addressed in their culture.
- Barriers to help-seeking such as stigma and shame.

(Goyal & Ta unpublished data)
Nursing Implications

- Asian American mothers do experience PPD
- May be less likely to report symptoms
- Institute screening prenatally and postpartum
- Involve the whole family in treatment decisions, specifically husbands
3 – Item EPDS

1. I have blamed myself unnecessarily when things went wrong
2. I have been anxious or worried for no good reason
3. I have felt scared or panicky for no very good reason

(Cox, Holden & Sagovsky, 1987)
2- Item Depression Screen

- Depressive symptoms (diminished mood & pleasure)
- Yes for either question = referral
  
  “During the past two weeks have you felt down, depressed, or hopeless?”

  “During the past two weeks, have you felt little interest or pleasure in doing things?”
Practice & Policy Implications

Future PPD interventions should:

- Culturally appropriate
- Consider importance of postpartum cultural traditions
- Consider presence of cultural barriers to help-seeking as ways to prevent the adverse effects of untreated PPD to the mother and baby
Get Involved

EMERGING CONSIDERATIONS
Sacramento
IN MATERNAL MENTAL HEALTH
MAY 6, 2013
PPD Resources

- www.postpartum.net
- www.beyondtheblues.com
- www.awhonn.org
- www.acog.org
- www.aap.org
- www.melaniesbattle.org
Why didn’t somebody warn me?"

The #1 complication of childbirth is depression.

One in eight new moms have postpartum depression. It is treatable! Call 1-800-944-4PPD.

Extreme exhaustion, appetite and sleep disturbances, mood swings, anxiety, or withdrawal.

Postpartum Support International
1-800-944-4771
www.postpartum.net

Call your health care provider and contact us:

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Case Study – “Jaswinder”

- 25 year old, Asian Indian
- 2 girls at home, ages 2 & 4
- Female infant, Apgars 8, 8
- 2 weeks postpartum
- Lives with in-laws
- Traditional Asian Indian family values
- Not sleeping well
- States “worried all of the time”

http://bixby.berkeley.edu/research/maternal-health/miso/bangladesh
“Jaswinder”

You are seeing Jaswinder in the office for her 2-week visit

Risk factors for Jaswinder?

• Female infant
• Two daughters at home
• not sleeping well
• Worried all of the time
• Traditional Asian Indian Family values?
What Can You do?

- Screen with EPDS
- No time?
  - Assess with 3-item EPDS
  - PHQ-2
- Ask more questions...
  - Describe your sleep?
  - Assess family values