

FEELING DOWN, BUT NOT TO GET DOWN

Is Postpartum Depression linked with New Parents' Sexual Function and Distress?



New publication:

Associations Between Postpartum Depressive Symptoms and Couples' Sexual Function and Sexual Distress Trajectories Across the Transition to Parenthood

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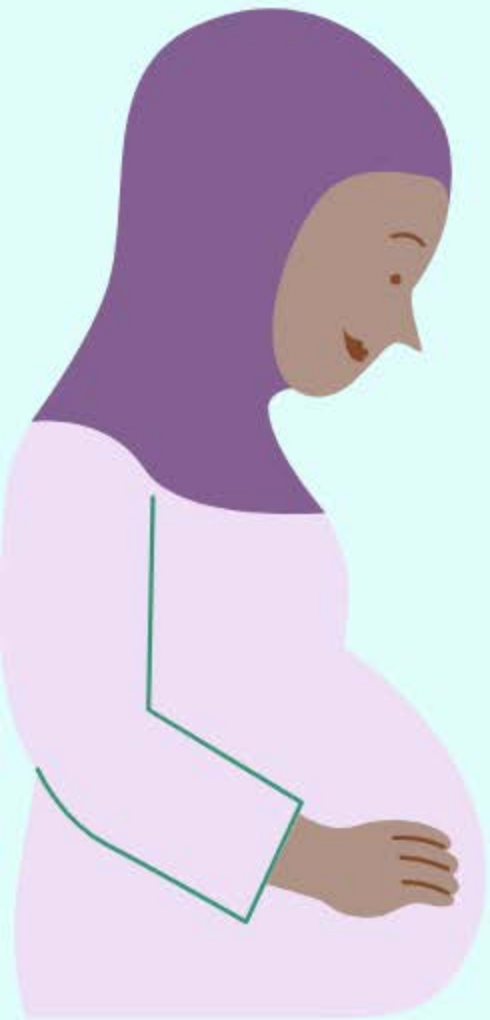
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*Scroll to the next slide,
we'll break down the
findings!*



How might your sexual function change during pregnancy/postpartum?

- Changes in desire
- Problems becoming or staying aroused
- Difficulties reaching orgasm
- Feeling less sexually satisfied in general



WE WANTED TO KNOW:

1

Does sexual function and sexual distress change throughout pregnancy and postpartum? Is this true for both birth-givers and their partners?

2

Do people who have more postpartum depressive symptoms have more sexual problems and are these persistent over time?

We sampled **203** couples who were pregnant with their **first child** and followed them through to 1-year postpartum.



WHAT DID WE FIND?



BOTH birth-giving and non-birth-giving partners experienced **declines** in sexual function (e.g., less desire, difficulty orgasming) during **pregnancy**.



From 3-months **postpartum** onward, sexual function **improved** for BOTH partners.

Interestingly, only **birth-givers** reported feeling worried or concerned about these changes in their sexuality.



These feelings of distress **worsened** during pregnancy and **improved** as their baby approached 1-year-old.

THE LINK WITH DEPRESSION

Depressive symptoms were linked with more **sexual problems** AND feeling more **distressed** about these problems at 3-months postpartum.



If you are experiencing changes to your **SEXUAL RELATIONSHIP** during pregnancy/postpartum...

(1) Know that these changes are **COMMON** and often get better with **TIME**, even without intervention.

(2) Low mood could be contributing to your sexual difficulties.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?



Talk **openly** with your partner to strengthen your connection and help you face these difficulties **together**.



Talk to your **health care provider** about your mood & sexual relationship. They can help you access **additional services** (e.g., therapy).

This is a summary of our published article:

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