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Pregnancy, childbirth and new motherhood during the pandemic

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Outline

- Overarching themes
 - Mothers are a high stakes population
 - Weighing risk versus risk
 - Compounded adjustments
- Mental health symptoms and treatments
- Strategies and Resources

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Mother: [muhth-er]- noun

One person who
does the job of
twenty. For free.
(see also:
masochist, loony,
saint.)

someecards
user card



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Mothers are a high stakes population

- Primary physical and emotional environment for the infant
- Maternal wellness is associated with offspring wellness
- 1/7 new mothers have depression
- 80% single-parent families (25% of children) are headed by single mothers; 1/3 live in poverty

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The stakes just got higher

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COVID-19 in Pregnancy

- Similar characteristics compared to general population
 - 92% mild illness, no deaths
 - Unlike SARS, MERS and Influenza, which are associated with disproportionate mechanical ventilation and maternal death
 - 75% with fever and/or cough
- 93% with c-section
- Unknown if more complications near delivery

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Chen et al (2020) NEJM

Changes in OB-office visits

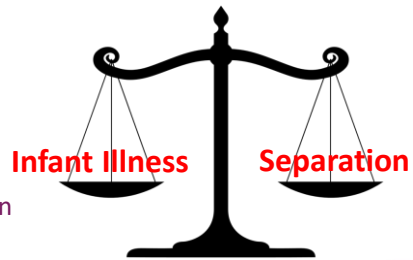
- Uncomplicated OB: 60-70% virtual
 - In-person visit at 36-40 weeks
 - All women given home blood pressure cuff
- Complicated OB
 - more in-person contact, tests, bloodwork
- Postpartum visits are virtual

Mother to child transmission of SARS-CoV-2

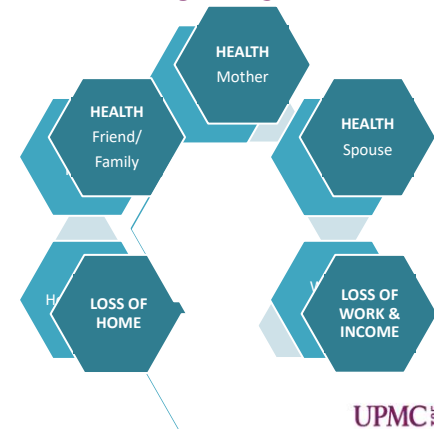
- Not detected in cord blood, amniotic fluid, vaginal mucus, or breast milk
 - 4/51 newborn reports (+)
- 24% of infected infants < 1 yo severe illness
- Hospital policies
 - Visitor restriction
 - PUI and (+) isolation; PPE
 - Mother-baby separation

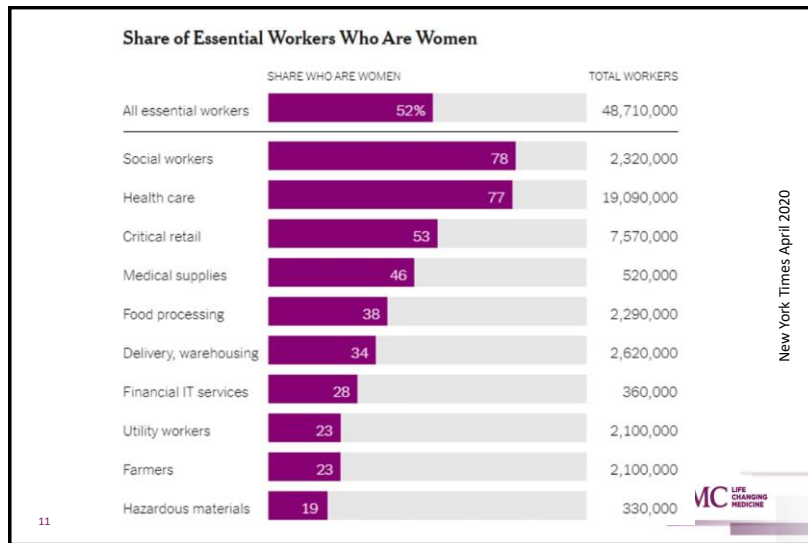
Shared decision making process for mother-infant separation

- Clinical condition of mother and infant
- Breastfeeding
- Test results
- Facility able to accommodate separation



Compounded identity adjustments





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Baby Blues

- Self-limited
- Maternal role functioning not affected
- Within 10 days of delivery
- 50-80% of new mothers
- Symptoms: tearfulness, irritability, anergia, overwhelmed feelings

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Perinatal Depression



- Affects 1 in 7 mothers
- Present before or during pregnancy 60% of the time

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Perinatal Depression: Themes

Anxiety, worry, overwhelmed

- GAD is more common in postpartum women than the general population
- Thoughts racing “Brain won’t shut off”
- Insomnia
- Panic symptoms

Self blame, guilt

- Inadequate mother
- Things will never be the same again; hopelessness
- Suboptimal delivery/medical complications

Marrs et al (2009) J Aff Disorders

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Obsessive-Compulsive Symptoms

- Obsessions = Irrational, intrusive thoughts
 - 25% of perinatal women have obsessions
 - 3-9% of perinatal women have OCD
 - Examples: Aggressive, harm befalling loved ones, contamination
 - Obsessions are ego-dystonic, very distressing, and mothers try to resist them or avoid danger

- Compulsions = Irresistible urges
 - Checking repeatedly on infant “won’t let child out of my sight”
 - Breastfeeding/pumping schedule
 - Preventing contact with germs

Perinatal Trauma and PTSD

- Risk Factors

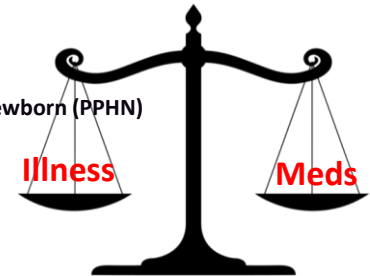
– Difficult birth	– Preterm birth
– Emergency c-section	– NICU
– Fear of birth	– Fetal anomaly
– Past abuse	– Maternal complications
– VLBW babies	– Perinatal loss

- Prevalence 18% (base population rate 4%)
- Highly comorbid with depression

THE SILVER LINING

Domains of reproductive toxicity

1. Spontaneous Abortion
2. Birth defects
3. Persistent Hypertension of the Newborn (PPHN)
4. Timing of delivery, Birth weight
5. Neonatal complications
6. Lactation
7. Neurobehavioral disorders



Postpartum depression and anxiety are treatable

- Antidepressants yield ~ 50% remission rate
 - Fluoxetine, Sertraline, Nortriptyline
 - Paroxetine, venlafaxine, escitalopram, bupropion
- Behavioral interventions yield ~ 40% remission rate
 - Home visitors
 - Interpersonal psychotherapy
 - Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

Lactation - antidepressants

	Relative infant dose (%)	Protein binding (%)
Sertraline	2.2	98
Paroxetine	2.1	95
Nortriptyline	1.5	92
Citalopram	3.6	80
Fluoxetine	6.8	95
Bupropion	0.7	75-88

unquantifiable

Hale, Medication and Mother's Milk 2004

Higher risk clinical scenarios

- Delusions, obsessive-compulsive thoughts and behaviors, somatic symptoms, past trauma
- More frequent clinical contact; higher level of care
- Adequate supplies of medications to avoid interruption

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Telemedicine

- So well suited for mothers !
- Med management
- Individual therapy
- Group therapy
 - NEST
 - New mindfulness program starting

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Resources

- **UPMC- Western Psychiatric Hospital at Magee**
- **New and Expectant Mothers Specialized Treatment Intensive Outpatient Program**
 - Call PsychcarePlus **412-624-2000**, option 2
OR email at **PsychCarePlus@upmc.edu**
- **Community options**
 - Healthy start: Virtual doula support during delivery in addition to moving beyond depression program
 - Kids Plus Pediatrics facebook page – New Moms Coffee
 - Forward wellness counseling

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Resources

- **Postpartum Support International**
 - Helpline, Support coordinators by geographical region, online support groups, facebook groups
- **The Bloom Foundation**
 - FREE Mom Support Groups every Tuesday and Thursday
 - <https://www.thebloomfoundation.org/mom-support-group/>

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4th trimester PROJECT™

f t i SEARCH

My Postpartum Plan - During COVID-19

< Building My Village Topics < My Postpartum Plan < My Postpartum Plan

Many things will be unexpected and possibly out of your control, but this may help serve as a guide to share your needs and be ready for the days ahead. This tool is meant to help new parents think about and prepare for the weeks after baby arrives. As you work on this plan try to keep it flexible and think about what YOU need not what others want to give.

Taking extra measures to protect your family against coronavirus, we can offer some ideas to think about while you make your postpartum support plan:

TOPICS IN MY POSTPARTUM PLAN

Getting Ready - Supporting New Parents During COVID-19

My Postpartum Plan - During COVID-19

<https://newmomhealth.com/buildingmyvillage/my-postpartum-plan-z6bde>

Visitors, nutrition/meals, homecare, childcare, selfcare, nighttime schedule, appointments

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Pandemic parenting

“Parenting and self-care need to look different right now and we have to be OK with lowering some of the bars”

“ . . Find some small moments of stillness, and maybe even joy, during this time of crisis. . . ”

“There may also be some good things including more time to be at home to rest and less pressure to be dressed up and ‘doing it all’ ”

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“Mother love in infancy and childhood is as important for mental health as are vitamins and proteins for physical health”

John Bowlby, 1953



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Mindfulness

- May we be happy
- May we be healthy and strong
- May we sleep well soon
- May this exhausting time together make our bond stronger
- May we have compassion for each other

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Thanks for your attention!

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