

The Bidirectional Relationship Between Breastfeeding & Postpartum Depression

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According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, approximately 1 in 8 women experience symptoms of postpartum depression.

What is postpartum depression?

- ❖ Postpartum depression is diagnosed when there is a major depressive episode after delivery that is two weeks or more.
- ❖ During this time frame the mother will experience a consistent depressed mood or loss of interest in normal daily activities and four accompanying symptoms.

Diagnostic Symptoms:

- ❖ Changes in weight or appetite
- ❖ Changes in psychomotor activity
- ❖ Inability to feel pleasure
- ❖ Hypersomnia or insomnia
- ❖ Feelings of guilt or worthlessness
- ❖ Difficulty concentrating
 - ❖ Fatigue
 - ❖ Suicidal ideations

Discussion

As more research has been conducted it has been noted that the relationship between breastfeeding and postpartum depression may be bidirectional. This indicates that although postpartum depression hinders breastfeeding, mothers who do not partake in breastfeeding may have a higher risk of PPD. Mothers who breast feed also recover quicker from PPD symptoms

Breastfeeding

- ❖ The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that infants be exclusively breastfed for approximately the first 6 months .
- ❖ Breastfeeding should be continued while introducing complementary foods for 1 year or longer.



Key Breastfeeding Indicators	Current Rates
Percentage of infants who are breastfed: Ever.*	83.9
Percentage of infants who are breastfed: At 6 months.*	56.7
Percentage of infants who are breastfed: At 1 year.*	35.0
Percentage of infants who are breastfed: Exclusively through 3 months.*	46.3
Percentage of infants who are breastfed: Exclusively through 6 months.*	25.8
Percentage of employers that have worksite lactation support programs. †	51.0
Percentage of breastfed newborns who receive formula supplementation within the first 2 days of life.*	19.4

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