

# Preexisting Mental Illness and Pregnancy

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## Introduction

More than one-fifth of women in the United States are diagnosed with a mental or behavioral disorder, with the highest population being the childbearing ages. Examining the disparities in perinatal care for women with preexisting mental illness allows for the identification of interventions that may be placed to limit these barriers.

## Barriers to Care

- Insufficient training and awareness
- Patient fear of stigma
- Patient engagement to care
- Appointment time constraints
- Lack of continuity of care
- Limited interprofessional care with maternal and mental health providers
- Lack of educational and referral support



## Discussion

Future research is required to identify interventions that are beneficial for limiting the barriers in care for perinatal women with preexisting mental illness. The proposal for further research includes implementing additional training and awareness for patients and providers related to mental health, and implementing co-management of care with maternal and mental health providers being present during all perinatal appointments.