



Perinatal e-News

LA BEST BABIES NETWORK
LABBN Healthy Babies. Our Future.
Presented by First 5 LA



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www.LABestBabies.org

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Women with Diabetes Before or During Pregnancy at Higher Risk of Depression

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A recent study in the *Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA)*, indicates that diabetes increases the risk of depression during pregnancy, as well as in the postpartum period. Whether women develop diabetes before or during pregnancy, the risk of depression is seen as being much stronger for women with diabetes. The study indicates that the biological changes that occur with diabetes might increase the risk of depression. Although several factors are linked to postpartum depression, studies have linked diabetes to an increased risk of depression in general.

National Nutrition Month® -
The theme for March 2009
is "Eat Right."

Approximately 10% to 12% of first-time mothers are affected with maternal depression. The study showed that low-income pregnant women and new mothers with diabetes are twice more likely to experience depression during the perinatal period than women without diabetes. Both gestational diabetes and pre-pregnancy diabetes complicates approximately 2% to 9% of pregnancies. If left untreated, postpartum depression can affect the mother-child relationship.

We invite you to contribute story ideas and event listings for our consideration in *Perinatal e-News*. To submit items please e-mail contact@labestbabies.org.

The good news is that women can be screened for both diabetes and depression in the perinatal period. Doctors recommend that regardless of one's socioeconomic background, perinatal screening for these conditions is necessary for all women. Pregnant women who feel depressed during or after pregnancy, should be encouraged to tell a loved one and contact their healthcare provider as soon as possible.

How the Network is Making a Difference

LA Best Babies Network provides technical support and resources to assist perinatal health providers with the latest information pertaining to the screening and treatment of maternal depression and diabetes in pregnancy.

Through the Network's **Healthy Births Care Quality Collaborative**, 10 participating clinics enhance screening efforts with the goals of early detection, treatment and prevention of conditions such as diabetes and maternal depression. With the support of Network members, these clinics learn how to improve the healthcare system itself and the delivery of evidence-based care, as well as engage women and families in the management of their care. Each clinic provides universal screening for diabetes and perinatal depression to expectant mothers, thereby increasing the number of mothers in L.A. County whose depression and diabetes could be detected early in pregnancy.

The added stress associated with pregnancy can lead to perinatal depression. Experts in the field encourage expectant parents to set up support systems before the baby arrives so that they have extra help as a measure of stress reduction. **First 5 LA** will be launching a **universal home visitation pilot program** (known as **Welcome, Baby!**) in July 2009 that will promote breastfeeding education and support; enhance community and family social support; as well as provide universal perinatal depression screening. LA Best Babies Network received a two-year grant to design and plan the implementation of this universal home visitation pilot.

This universal home visitation pilot program is part of the wide range of services for First 5 LA's **Best Start LA** communities. Findings from a focus group discussion, which informed the universal home visitation pilot, indicated that parents with family support networks experienced less stress and were very confident in bringing their newborn home.

Learn More:

JAMA News Release "[Women with Diabetes Before or During Pregnancy At Significantly Increased Risk of Experiencing Depression](#)"

Read "[Improving the Emotional Well-Being of Prenatal Patients](#)" and

["Investing in Universal Home Visitation" in the Network's *Perinatal Connections*, February 2009](#)

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