

A Saudi Woman with Tokophobia: A Case Report

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Abstract : Background: Tokophobia is a pathological fear of pregnancy that can lead to the avoidance of childbirth. It is classified as primary or secondary. This report describes a patient with tokophobia, as well as her presentation, risk factors, comorbidities, and treatment. Case Presentation: A 43-year-old Saudi woman experienced tokophobia upon becoming pregnant for the fifth time. She was assessed in two clinical interviews by a consultant psychiatrist specializing in women's mental health. In addition, she completed several questionnaires for assessment of different aspects of her mental health: overall depression, perinatal depression, generalized anxiety, maternal functioning, and fear of childbirth (FOC). Several risk factors and comorbidities that may have contributed to the development of tokophobia in this patient were discussed, including traumatic experiences in previous deliveries, the unplanned nature of the pregnancy, perinatal depression, and pronounced symptoms of anxiety. A collaborative decision to perform a C-section was made, in line with obstetric guidelines and good mental health practice. Full symptomatic recovery was achieved immediately after delivery. Conclusions: We hope to increase clinical awareness of the assessment and management of tokophobia, which is a relatively new concept and, as yet, understudied.

Keywords : tokophobia, fear of childbirth, mental health, anxiety, case report, depression, fear of delivery, psychiatry, cesarean section, perinatal depression

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