The Impact of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy in the Management of Perinatal Anxiety

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Abstract : Generalized anxiety disorder (GAD) is a common mental health illness affecting approximately 10% of the perinatal population. Research examining cognitive behavioral therapy in this population has only recently become more prevalent though exploring this subject is long overdue. This research examines the impact of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) on GAD during the perinatal period. The aim of this project was to identify the most effective way to manage GAD during the perinatal period to provide clinicians with evidence-based methods of caring for this population's mental health. The research was conducted using several databases to identify ten primary research articles involving anxiety management. A critique and a systematic review of the literature was done. The results of the systematic literature review suggested that CBT had a significant positive impact on perinatal anxiety. Three main themes were derived from the literature: CBT for managing GAD in the general population, CBT for managing GAD in the perinatal population, and CBT's effect on worry and problematic behaviors in both populations. Nurse practitioners are central in improving access to and treatment of perinatal anxiety disorders.
Keywords : anxiety, cognitive behavioral therapy, nurse practitioner, perinatal

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