Prevalence and Risk Factors for Postpartum Depression: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Abstract : Background: One of the most important public health problems affecting the health of the mother and child is postpartum depression. This study aimed to determine the frequency and risk factors that contribute to postpartum depression (PPD). Methods: The research was conducted from November 2022 to April 2023 on a convenient sample of mothers (N=195) who have children up to 6 months of age during home visits by visiting nurses in the Zagreb area or during the breastfeeding support group 'Vita'. The Edinburgh Postpartum Depression Questionnaire and the Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support were used. Results: Symptoms of PPD of varying intensity were present in 43 (22.05%) participants. It was found that mothers with previous mental disorders and those who are less satisfied with their husband's support have more depressive symptoms than mothers who do not have previous mental disorders and are satisfied with their husband's support. Also, it was found that mothers with depressive symptoms had a lower level of support from significant others, family and friends than mothers without depressive symptoms. Conclusion: The prevalence of postpartum depression (PPD) in the sample was high, and it was shown that the following risk factors influence its occurrence: previous mental disorders, dissatisfaction with emotional support from the husband, and a lower level of social support from significant others, family and friends. It is important to raise awareness of the problem and recognize the symptoms in time to provide adequate psychosocial support to women in labor.