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- Screening for Postpartum Depression

FROM:

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Introduction

- According to a meta-analysis of 59 studies postpartum depression affects approximately 13 per cent of women.¹
- The Region of Peel has approximately 15,000 births per year. An estimated 1,950 new Peel mothers will experience depression within the first year after giving birth.
- Peel Public Health recommends using the EPDS at 6-8 weeks to screen postpartum women. The well baby visit or the postpartum check-up may provide suitable opportunities to complete the EPDS.
- The EPDS can also be used during the prenatal period to identify symptoms of depression or at any time during the first year postpartum.²

Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)

- The EPDS is a 10 item validated scale devised as a screening questionnaire to improve the detection of postpartum depression. (See attached). It is an internationally recognized tool that has been translated into 20 languages.²
- The EPDS is self-administered and it only takes a few minutes to fill out. It is easily incorporated into everyday clinical practice and has high acceptability in diverse cultures.
- Each item is scored on a four point scale from 0 to 3, with a total score ranging from 0 to 30. A score of 13 or higher could indicate major depression when using the English version.²

A new website for Postpartum Mood Disorders has been developed by Best Start, Ontario's maternal, newborn and early child development resource centre. For more information on postpartum depression or to order resource materials visit www.lifewithnewbaby.ca.

For information about community resources for postpartum depression call Region of Peel, Public Health at 905-799-7700.

¹ O'Hara & Swain. Rates and risk of postpartum depression—a meta analysis. *International Review of Psychiatry* 1996;8:37-54.

² Cox & Holden. *Perinatal Mental Health: A Guide to the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale*. 2003.

Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS)

As you are pregnant or have recently had a baby, we would like to know how you are feeling. Please underline the answer that comes closest to how you have felt **IN THE PAST 7 DAYS**, not just how you feel today.

Here is an example, already completed.

I have felt happy:

Yes, all the time

Yes, most of the time This would mean: "I have felt happy most of the time" during the past week.

No, not very often Please complete the other questions in the same way.

Not at all

In the past 7 days:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. I have been able to laugh and see the funny side of things:</p> <p>0 As much as I always could
1 Not quite so much now
2 Definitely not so much now
3 Not at all</p> | <p>6. Things have been getting on top of me:</p> <p>3 Yes, most of the time I haven't been able to cope at all
2 Yes, sometimes I haven't been coping as well as usual
1 No, most of the time I have coped quite well
0 No, I have been coping as well as ever</p> |
| <p>2. I have looked forward with enjoyment to things:</p> <p>0 As much as I ever did
1 Rather less than I used to
2 Definitely less than I used to
3 Hardly at all</p> | <p>7. I have been so unhappy that I have had difficulty sleeping:</p> <p>3 Yes, most of the time
2 Yes, sometimes
1 Not very often
0 No, not at all</p> |
| <p>3. I have blamed myself unnecessarily when things went wrong:</p> <p>3 Yes, most of the time
2 Yes, some of the time
1 Not very often
0 No, never</p> | <p>8. I have felt sad or miserable:</p> <p>3 Yes, most of the time
2 Yes, quite often
1 Not very often
0 No, not at all</p> |
| <p>4. I have felt worried and anxious for no good reason:</p> <p>0 No, not at all
1 Hardly ever
2 Yes, sometimes
3 Yes, very often</p> | <p>9. I have been so unhappy I have been crying:</p> <p>3 Yes, most of the time
2 Yes, quite often
1 Only occasionally
0 No, never</p> |
| <p>5. I have felt scared or panicky for no very good reason:</p> <p>3 Yes, quite a lot
2 Yes, sometimes
1 No, not very much
0 No, not at all</p> | <p>10. The thought of harming myself has occurred to me:</p> <p>3 Yes, quite often
2 Sometimes
1 Hardly ever
0 Never</p> |

Source: Cox, J.L., Holden, J.M., and Sagovsky, R. 1987. Detection of postnatal depression: Development of the 10-item Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale. *British Journal of Psychiatry* 150:782-786.

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