

# Women's Experience of Post-partum Post-traumatic Stress Disorder: A systematic review

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## Background

- The maternal-infant dyad provides a child with a secure base for social exploration and a source of comfort when distressed.<sup>1</sup>
- The perinatal period is a time of increased vulnerability to mental health conditions that pose risks to child development when that foundational relationship is compromised<sup>2,3</sup>
- Prevalence rates of postpartum Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PP-PTSD) have been reported to vary from 0-21% in community samples and 0-43% in high-risk women.<sup>4-6</sup>
- Research examining the experience of postpartum onset PTSD is sparse. To provide more comprehensive care, more information on women's experience of and risk factors for PP-PTSD is needed.

## Objective

In light of varied prevalence rates, poor understanding of risk factors, and limited understanding of attitudes and experiences of women who experience PP-PTSD, the purpose of this study was to conduct a systematic literature review to understand women's experiences of PTSD in the post-partum period.



## Study Design

Systematic review:

- Protocol registered in PROSPERO
- CINAHL, Medline, PsycInfo, Embase, CCRT, Family & Society, Academic Search Premier, and Scopus databases
- Search terms included: Postpartum, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder, Birth-trauma, Delivery,

Subjects:

- Women over 18 years old
- Postpartum women (birth – 12 months postpartum)



## Expected Outcomes

- Depending on the type of traumatic event, there may be different ways in which Health Care Providers initiate and select treatment options.
- We suspect that there will be different types of PP-PTSD.
- These different types of PP-PTSD will require different approaches to assist in mentally stabilizing women.
- The intent of this project is to improve patient outcomes through improving clinical decision-making in the care and treatment of women who experience PP-PTSD.

## References

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## Results

- Results identified through database search: n=5706
- Records after duplicates removed: n=2348
- Level 1 title and abstract screening with 2 reviewers:
  - Test sample of 600 articles resulted in n =83 articles that met inclusion criteria and n=16 that need to be screened in full to determine eligibility
- The initial 600 articles were screened with a 96.2% agreement between the two reviewers.