ABSTRACT

POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION IN JAMAICAN WOMEN;
An analysis done on at six-weeks postpartum on women
at the University Hospital of the West Indies.

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This study aimed at determining the incidence of postpartum depression and
to see if there are any differences in the risk factors between this Jamaican population
and other countries. Data was gathered over a six week period, 14.2.96 to 25.3.96,
in the postnatal clinic at the University Hospital of the West Indies.

The Edinburgh Postnatal Scale was used to detect postpartum depression in
the women. A Likert Scale was used to assess their attitudes toward their babies.
Demographic, obstetric and psychosocial data were gathered from these women.

The results showed a 26% incidence of postpartum depression in a population
of 189 women. The factors that found statistical significance were: attitude scores (P
value < 0.001, T value > 1.96), having a worse than expected experience in having their
babies (T value > 1.96) and having being less frightened due to the information they
received on the wards and the clinic (T value > 1.96). The women detected with
postpartum depression did not necessarily look or feel depressed.

This study population had only one risk factor in common with studies from
other countries, i.e. having a worse than expected experience in having their babies.
This factor was significant in the first week of the puerperium while in this study it
was significant at six weeks postpartum.