TITLE: Prenatal and Postnatal Screening for Depression in First Nations Women: Diagnostic Accuracy and Evidence-Based Guidelines

DATE: 15 April 2010

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

1. What is the diagnostic accuracy of screening prenatal and postnatal First Nations women with the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale?

2. What are the evidence-based guidelines for screening prenatal and postnatal First Nations women with the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale?

METHODS:

A limited literature search was conducted on key health technology assessment resources, including PubMed, the Cochrane Library (Issue 3, 2010), University of York Centre for Reviews and Dissemination (CRD) databases, EuroScan, international health technology agencies, and a focused Internet search. The search was limited to English language articles published between 2003 and April 2010. No filters were applied to limit the retrieval by study type. Internet links were provided, where available.

The summary of findings was prepared from the abstracts of the relevant information. Please note that data contained in abstracts may not always be an accurate reflection of the data contained within the full article.

RESULTS:

HTIS reports are organized so that the higher quality evidence is presented first. Therefore, health technology assessment reports, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses are presented first. These are followed by randomized controlled trials, controlled clinical trials, observational studies, and evidence-based guidelines.
Four observational studies were identified regarding the diagnostic accuracy of screening prenatal and postnatal First Nations women with the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale. No relevant health technology assessments, systematic review, meta-analyses, randomized controlled trials, or controlled clinical trials were identified. No relevant evidence-based guidelines for screening prenatal and postnatal First Nations women with the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale were identified. Additional articles of potential interest can be found in the appendix.

OVERALL SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

Two studies used the Edinburgh Postpartum Depression Scale (EPDS) to identify the prevalence of depression in women participating in prenatal outreach programs, including Aboriginal women.\(^1,4\) Although the first study used EPDS, the accuracy of the test was not assessed.\(^1\) The authors of the second study supported the use of the EPDS and suggested the scale be incorporated into routine prenatal visits by nurses.\(^4\) A third study investigating feelings during pregnancy used the EPDS to determine anxiety, depression, and self-harm in women attending prenatal outreach clinics, most of whom were Aboriginal.\(^2\) Anxiety represented the most variation in overall EPDS score and was significantly higher in women less than 19 years of age.\(^2\) The fourth study sought to validate the EPDS in First Nations and Metis women.\(^3\) Postpartum depression was diagnosed in 17% of participants by using screening instruments, including the EPDS, and Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders-IV criteria.\(^3\) The authors concluded that their findings support the validity of the EPDS as a measure of postpartum depression in this population.\(^3\)

Depression,\(^1,2,4\) anxiety,\(^3\) and thoughts of self-harm\(^1\) were all identified using the EPDS in Aboriginal and First Nations women. Study findings support the validity of the EPDS as a measure of postpartum depression in First Nations women\(^3\) and it may be used as a tool by nurses during routine prenatal visits.\(^4\) No evidence-based guidelines for screening prenatal and postnatal First Nations women with the EPDS were identified.
REFERENCES SUMMARIZED:

Health technology assessments
No literature identified

Systematic reviews and meta-analyses
No literature identified

Randomized controlled trials
No literature identified

Controlled clinical trials
No literature identified

Observational studies


Guidelines and recommendations
No literature identified

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APPENDIX – FURTHER INFORMATION:

Dissertations


Additional references

   Note: see Prenatal/Postpartum Depression, page 34