Latinas More Likely to Have Postpartum Depression

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Studies show Latinas are more likely than other women to have postpartum depression and other mood disorders associated with childbirth, according to a Postpartum Support International (PSI) statement.

A 2009 study published in Maternal and Child Health Journal found that pregnant Latinas were 32.6 percent likely to suffer from depression. Mexican Latinas were especially susceptible, with a depression rate of 36.8 percent.

A 2005 study published in the Journal of Women's Health found that Latinos had a 37 percent chance of suffering from depression in their lifetimes, compared with 25 percent for the general population. The study also found that Latinas are more likely to have depression than other women, but less likely to be diagnosed with it.

"The statistics for Latinas suffering from mental illness related to childbirth and untreated depression continue to climb, and depression continues to be the No. 1 complication of pregnancy," said Lucy Puryear, MD, president of PSI. "We know many of these new mothers are not asked about feeling depressed or anxious during their pregnancy by a health care provider."

PSI has released a Spanish language DVD, Madre Saludable, Familia Feliz, to help educate Latinas about the dangers of perinatal mood disorders and ways to deal with them. Like its English language counterpart, Healthy Mom, Happy Families, the DVD is offered to U.S. hospitals at no cost.

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