

Relationship with the partner and social support

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Relationship with partner

- A study of 562 Icelandic women
Distress = screen positive for depression, anxiety and stress

360 (64.1%) were in the distressed group

202 (35.9%) were in the non-distressed group

- Answered the Dyadic Adjustment Scale (DAS)
 - 32 items, assessing: consensus on matters of importance to marital functioning; dyadic satisfaction; dyadic cohesion and affection expression

- 96 (17.1%) were dissatisfied in their partner relationship ($p= 0.001$)

83 (86.5%) in the distressed group

13 (13.5%) in the None-distressed gr.

(Jonsdottir et al, 2017; Spanier, 1976)

Effect of dissatisfaction in relationship with partner

- 4.6 times more likely to experience distress
(= depression and/or anxiety and/or stress)
- Increased need of sick leaves during pregnancy ($p = 0.001$)
- Increased total number of sick days leaves ($p = 0.17$)
- A link was found between dissatisfaction in partner relationship and:
 - Induction of labor ($p = 0.037$)
 - Have an episiotomy ($p = 0.029$)
 - Needed a vacuum extraction (0.002)

(Jonsdottir et al, 2020; 2019; 2017)

Argument for Screening for relationship satisfaction

Poor partner involvement were linked with increased depressive symptoms
(Boekhorst et al, 2019)

A woman who does not have trust in her partner might be afraid of “letting go” of control during childbirth, resulting in more complicated childbirth.
(Dahlberg, 2019)

Argument for Screening for relationship satisfaction

We should assess the expectant parent's relationship by asking:
“How satisfied do you generally feel about the relationship with your partner”?

Offer interventions when needed



The key is a trustful therapeutic relationship with the midwife / health care provided

Perceived social support

- A study of 503 Icelandic women.
Distress = screen positive for depression, anxiety and stress
- Answered *Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support (MSPSS) scale*
 - 12 items scale, divided into 3 x 4 questions
- 42 (13.5 %) reported weak family support, 47 (82.5%) in the PDG ($p= 0.002$)
- Very few women (n 8) reported weak friends support, or weak significant other's support (n = 4).

Results of weak family support

- Among women who reported weak family support, these pregnancy problems were more common:
 - Fatigue ($p = 0.026$)
 - Nausea ($p = 0.020$)
 - Heartburn ($p = 0.007$)
- The women also needed more prenatal care visits ($p = 0.017$)
- They were issued more sick days ($p = 0.018$)

(Jonsdottir, et al, 2020)

Interaction of distress and perceived social support

Women who feel distressed:

- Might experience decreased in their sense of control,
- Which might hinder them from noticing or accepting support offered by families and friends

(Dahlberg, 2019; Mirowsky & Ross, 2012; Staneva, et al., 2015)

Midwives should enquire about social support and offer ways to strengthen support when needed

(Bäckström et al., 2016)

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