

The PPMD Connection



News from the Peel Postpartum Mood Disorder Committee

PPMD Update

Volunteer Peer Educator Program

We are currently recruiting volunteer mothers to deliver educational workshops in the community to raise awareness and understanding about PMD

Training will take place on:

Saturday March 27

8:30 am- 4:30 pm
Region of Peel

10 Peel Centre Drive,
Brampton

If you are interested in applying to become a Volunteer Peer Educator and have personally experienced PMD please contact:

Region of Peel Volunteer Resources

905-799-7700

Coordinator's Corner

Winter 2010

I am extremely happy to be able to report that The Peel PMD Program has been awarded a three year Trillium Grant to develop a Telephone Support Line. I feel very fortunate to have been able to partner with Telecare Distress Centre, the lead agency in the collaborative. Telecare has over 30 years experience operating a 24/7 telephone distress line and their dedicated, multilingual volunteers answer calls from the community regarding a vast array of issues such as loneliness, mental illnesses, grief, abuse, social isolation or interpersonal relationship problems. Prenatal and postpartum emotional adjustment issues will soon be added to this already extensive list.

We welcome Nelia Deamaral, as our new Volunteer/ Outreach Coordinator. Nelia will be responsible for managing the PMD Support Line. Nelia comes with extensive experience supervising staff and volunteers at a crisis intake centre. She also has a passion for supporting women during the perinatal period. She is starting her position on February 16, I am sure you will soon meet her in the community as she promotes the new service

Monica Irwin, PMD Specialist
905-791-7800 ext. 2650



Paternal Postpartum Depression

Research suggests that approximately 1 in 14 men will experience depression in the prenatal and postpartum period. While postpartum depression in their partner is the strongest predictor of paternal depression, men can experience depression independently of their partners'. There is evidence that men's depression increases between 6 weeks and 6 months after the birth. New dads don't generally access the doctor or midwife where women's mood disorders are often detected.

The factors that contribute to paternal postpartum depression are similar to those that affect women such as lack of social support, stress, relationship issues, lack of sleep, and the transition to parenthood. Men are dealing with specific issues such as the impact of changing social roles for fathers, change in family dynamics, worries about extra responsibilities and they tend not to talk about how they feel as readily as women do. *(Continued on next page)*

Steering Committee Members: Best Start Health Coalition in Peel • Caledon Parent /Child Centre • Centre for Addiction and Mental Health • Credit Valley Hospital • Mississauga Parent Child Resource Centre • Infant and Child Development Services Peel • Peel Children's Centre • Peel Public Health • Punjabi Community Health Services • Success By 6 Peel • Vita Centre

"Masked Depression"

Women experience depression at a higher rate than men, yet in the last decade more studies have focused on whether men show **different** symptoms of depression than women. Some authors have use the term *masked depression* or *male depressive syndrome* to refer to the male symptoms of depression. Women can experience these symptoms as well but the frequency is higher in men.

Male depressive syndrome symptoms:

- Reduced ability to deal with stress
- Increased aggression and outward-reacting behaviour, problems with self-control
- Feeling burnt-out and empty
- Irritability, restlessness and frustration
- Alcohol and drug abuse



Men's depression is under-diagnosed and many men receive insufficient treatment. Research points to the need to raise awareness of mood disorders related to becoming a father. Since a father's mental health can affect his children and the father/infant relationship, it is important that fathers experiencing mood disorders in this vulnerable period access the help they need.

References: European Fatherhood [Male Postnatal Depression](#) Jan 2007 & Madsen (2009). Men's Mental Health. [The Journal of Men's Studies](#) Vol.17 No.1

The world is full of suffering. It is also full of overcoming it.-Helen Keller

Resources

Dads interested in participating in a Canadian research study:

Identifying the Support Needs of Fathers affected by Postpartum Depression. Contact 1-888-790-1777. Confidentiality is assured.

Dads' Postpartum Depression Study:

A study of fathers with postpartum depression and anxiety.

Learn more about relaxation and stress relieving techniques

Tips and techniques for getting anger under control

[GreatDad.com](#) An online parenting resource from dads' point of view

Watch the [video](#) of 3 families courageously sharing their experience with PMD at the *Unmasking Postpartum Depression Conference* Oct. 2009 Regina SK

My Child and I-Attachment for Life

A resource for parents of children aged 0-3 to promote attachment from the [Best Start Resource Centre](#)

Paternal Postpartum Depression (cont'd from pg. 1)

Pregnancy appears to be the most stressful period for men, perhaps due to changes in their partner, concern about changes in lifestyle and feeling unsure about their role. Paternal postpartum depression is still not recognized in psychiatric diagnostic literature so it is often assumed that the symptoms men experience are similar to those in maternal depression. Some fathers describe their experience of paternal postpartum depression as feeling trapped, feeling overcome with anger, overwhelmed by feelings of helplessness and some feel disappointed by their experience of fatherhood. Dads should visit their doctor for a full assessment, seek extra emotional and practical support from family and friends and remember they are not alone. Additional resources for families can be found at www.pmdinpeel.ca.

Adapted from [PANDA Fact Sheet](#)

Relaxation Technique

Diaphragmatic breathing creates a state of calm and well-being. To practice follow these steps:

- Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Let go and relax tense muscles.
- Focus on your breathing and take deep, slow breaths through your nose. Place one hand on your chest and one on your abdomen.
- Move your breathing from your chest to your abdomen. Your chest should remain still and your stomach should expand and contract easily and effortlessly with each breath.
- Slow your breathing down by counting to three as you breathe in and again as you breathe out.
- Continue for about 10 minutes and focus on the feelings of relaxation

