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IMPORTANCE OF PERINATAL DEPRESSION SCREENING IN OBSTETRIC HOSPITALS

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Relevance. During periods of pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum, women face significant hormonal, physiologic and psychologic changes that might lead to impairment of their both mental and physical wellbeing. According to American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, 50 percent of women who develop postpartum depression begin experiencing depressive symptoms already during pregnancy. Moreover, women with a history of previous depressive episodes are 30-35 percent more likely to face perinatal depression (PND). This high incidence reveals the importance of implementing proper screening for PND during pregnancy and puerperium. According to Breese's "Risk Factors for Postpartum Depression: A Retrospective Investigation", more than 80 percent of women exhibit depressive symptoms during their reproductive age and that psychopathology during pregnancy has a marked negative impact on uterine environment, hormone production, therefore adversely affecting fetal growth and overall outcomes.

Aim: evaluate the importance and efficacy of screening for perinatal depression in pregnant and postpartum women in the Republic of Belarus with ambition to implement this screening process for other obstetric and gynecological professionals.

Materials and methods. Our study was carried out at the 1st Minsk City Clinical Hospital during March 2019-March 2020; 113 puerperal women were included in the research. We assessed the patient's risk of perinatal depression with the help of Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS). A score of 10 or greater on the evaluation reflected high probability of depressive disorders that we subsequently categorized as "high risk group". In addition to the EPDS questionnaire, the patient's medical and labor history were analyzed for any remarkable values that can attribute to the development of perinatal depression. The obtained data was statistically analyzed with the use of licensed Statistica 10.0 program and MS Office Excel 2013.

Results. Based on the EPDS scale, our cohort study revealed 34 (30%) out of the 113 patients scored 10 and higher on the questionnaire that highly suggested the risk of perinatal depression manifestation in those patients. Out of the 34 women who were categorized as high risk the median age was 29 years (minimum 17, maximum 42), 23.5% patients had chronic placental insufficiency, 26.5% had various underlying gynecological pathology, 11.7% suffered from arterial hypertension, 23.5% were anemic, 26.4% patients faced threatened miscarriages during the course of their pregnancies, 2.9% were preeclamptic. Importantly, 55.8% of first-time mothers showed significant PND signs according to EPDS. 30.8% of all the deliveries were characterized by abnormal duration, 20.5% were cesarean section deliveries (28.5% – due to emergency, 71.4% – planned), 79.5% were deliveries per vies naturales. It should be noted that 14.7% of newborns were born in moderately severe or severe medical state which might have greatly affected their mothers' psychological wellbeing.

Conclusions. According to the 30% prevalence of women exhibiting depressive symptoms during puerperium, it is evident that perinatal depression screening should be widely implemented for the timely prevention of postpartum depression. The use of proper screening will promote the assurance of adequate mother-child bonding with no impeding psychological deterrents, will reflect the psychological state of expecting mother giving health care providers the chance to intervene and the necessity of hospitalization in psychiatric wards will be decreased proving to be not only prophylactic but economically effective.