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THE PREDICTIVE ROLE OF ANXIETY DISORDERS ON DEPRESSIVE PHENOMENOLOGY DURING POST-PARTUM PERIOD

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Aims: To investigate the predictive role of any specific (DSM-IV) Anxiety Disorders (AD) on depressive symptoms and Major or Minor Depressive Disorder (MDD, mDD) during early postpartum period.

Method: Women (at the 12th-15th gestational week, N=1066) were recruited in the framework of the Program 'Perinatal Depression - Research & Screening Unit (PND-ReScU)'. Depressive symptoms were assessed by the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS), and Axis-I disorders (AD, MDD, mDD) were diagnosed with the Structured Clinical Interview for Axis-I Disorders (SCID-I).

Results: Any current AD at baseline (3rd month of pregnancy) was detected in 231 (21.7%). Having at least one current AD, was associated with a greater likelihood of having MDD or mDD during the early postpartum period, even after the adjustment for the confounding factor of having a lifetime history of MDD (RR=3.86 95%CI 1.58-9.42).

In particular, women affected by Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (N=17; 1.6%) or Panic Disorder (N=43; 4%) had at higher risk to develop depressive symptoms (EPDS \geq 13) during the postpartum period than women without these AD (RR=6.9 and 6.7 respectively). As for the risk of developing PPD, the strongest association was found for women with Panic Disorder (RR=7.6 95% CI 2.62-22.0).

Conclusions: AD are associated with a greater likelihood to develop depressive symptoms and MDD or mDD during the early postpartum period. Women with current PD have the strongest risk to develop both MDD or mDD and depressive symptoms during early postpartum period compared to other anxiety disorders.