

# Certain characteristics linked with depression before and after giving birth

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Depression during pregnancy and following childbirth (perinatal depression) is a common and potentially severe condition. In a *Journal of Neuroscience Research* study, researchers examined subgroups of

women followed from pregnancy to six months postpartum, for example comparing those with depression only after childbirth with those experiencing depression during pregnancy.

Several characteristics were associated with depression before and after giving birth, including smoking prior to pregnancy, having experienced [intimate partner violence](#), and suffering from migraines or premenstrual syndrome. Various other characteristics were unique to [depressive symptoms](#) at different time points before and after giving birth.

The findings suggest that different perinatal depression trajectories have different characteristics, which could be used to create individualized [treatment options](#).

"We are glad that our study of this complex phenomenon contributes further information on the possible pathways and pathogenesis of depressive symptoms in the perinatal period," said lead author Dr. Anna Wikman, of Uppsala University, in Sweden. "The results also suggest a need for individualized advice and possibly different treatment approaches for different patient subgroups; however, we do believe further studies are needed to deepen our understanding of these issues."

**More information:** Anna Wikman et al, Characteristics of women with different perinatal depression trajectories, *Journal of Neuroscience Research* (2019). [DOI: 10.1002/jnr.24390](https://doi.org/10.1002/jnr.24390)

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