

Mental health symptoms common in Black individuals during pregnancy

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Black individuals experience high levels of comorbid mental health distress during pregnancy, according to a study published in the December issue of *The Nurse Practitioner*.

Susan Gennaro, Ph.D., R.N., from the William F. Connell School of Nursing at Boston College in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts, and colleagues examined the prevalence of mental health conditions (depression, [anxiety](#), and stress) in 452 pregnant Black people.

The researchers found that 42.9 percent had elevated scores on depression, anxiety, and/or stress measures. Among these 194 study participants, mean scores were 9.16 for anxiety, 12.80 for depression, and 21.79 for stress. More than one-third of participants (36.1 percent) experienced two symptoms, and one-third reported all three symptoms.

"Pregnant Black individuals experience high levels of comorbid mental health distress including depression, anxiety, and stress," the authors write. "The findings indicate that treatment for [mental health concerns](#) needs to be broad-based and effective for all three conditions. Prenatal interventions should aim to address mental health distress through screening and treatment of depression, anxiety, and stress, especially for pregnant Black individuals. This study furthers understanding of the prevalence of prenatal mental health conditions in pregnant Black people."

More information: Susan Gennaro et al, Depression, anxiety, and stress in pregnant Black people, *The Nurse Practitioner* (2023). [DOI: 10.1097/01.NPR.00000000000000117](#)

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