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# THE INFLUENCE OF MATERNAL PERINATAL PSYCHOLOGICAL DISORDERS ON CHILD DEVELOPMENT

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**Introduction**. Perinatal mental health is fundamental to a healthy society [1]. Evidence underlining its violations' global risk has accumulated over the past three decades, but many questions remain, including how these vulnerable offspring developmental trajectories unfold [2].

The **purpose** of this review is to analyze current research highlighting the effects of maternal depression in the perinatal period on child development.

**Material and methods**. The search query was carried out among the publications of 2025 in the database PubMed and included the words "perinatal psychology", "child". Several dozen scientific articles were processed by the selective search method. A final number of 10 sources were included in this narrative review.

**Results and discussion**. Although the key search phrase was "perinatal psychology" in general, the results revealed publications almost exclusively on peripartum depression, so the analysis was limited to this condition.

Negative associations have been established between depression and exclusive and prolonged breastfeeding, which are optimal feeding practices as defined by the World Health Organization [3].

Maternal peripartum depression was negatively correlated with infant behavioural development at **12 months of age**, and a potential cumulative effect was observed [4].

Another study aimed to investigate the associations of maternal depressive and anxiety symptoms across pregnancy trimesters and their trajectories with neurodevelopmental outcomes in 16 229 children **aged 0 to 24 months** [5]. The analysis showed a higher risk of neurodevelopmental delay in the communication domain, in the gross motor domain, in the fine motor domain, in the problem-solving domain, and in the personal-social domain [5].

Chronic perinatal depressive symptoms were associated with greater child negative affectivity **at two years** [6].

Significant long-term associations were found between maternal mental health and child outcomes between the **ages of 4 and 15**. Specifically, higher levels of maternal trait anxiety and neuroticism were associated with an increase in children's internalizing, externalizing, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder symptoms [7].

In population-based cohort study of **9- to-15-year-old** children, prenatal maternal depressive symptoms were associated with differences in the trajectories of functional brain connectivity. These findings highlight the relevance of prenatal maternal mental health in understanding offspring neurodevelopmental processes [8].

Maternal perinatal depressive disorders are also associated with an increased risk of autism spectrum disorder in offspring [9]. The results of the systematic review and meta-analysis revealed a significant association between maternal perinatal depression and an increased risk of Disruptive Behavioural Disorder symptoms, including Conduct Disorder and Oppositional Defiant Disorder symptoms in **children and adolescents** [9].

Therefore, recognizing and addressing perinatal depression is crucial for the health and well-being of the patient and their baby [10]. Screening for perinatal depression should be a routine part of prenatal and postpartum care, utilizing tools such as the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) to identify those at risk [10].

**Conclusions**:

1. The scientific achievements of 2025 confirm that maternal perinatal depression has negative short- and long-term consequences for child development.

2. To reduce the negative consequences, multidisciplinary maternity and childhood support programs are needed.

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