

Pregnant and Depressed

By Mike Witzky

You may have seen an article about this by Roxanne Nelson in a previous issue of *Prevention* and I thought I would use some of her information in this article. She sites new research that suggests that one in five pregnant women are depressed. This can be attributed to the result of hormonal shifts, stress, lack of sleep, dietary deficits or not enough physical activities. A University of Michigan study reported that 20% of the 3,500 pregnant women studied had signs of mild to severe depression but only 14% were getting treatment.

This comes at a time when you anticipate feeling happy and look forward to your new arrival and many women don't know what to make of these symptoms. Let me be clear about what to do! Seek help – talk to someone – and don't feel guilty about your feelings. This kind of depression can be successfully treated and no one needs to feel that they are alone and the only one feeling this way. If you are feeling this way talk to your doctor or call my office for a referral to a counseling agency. I would love to see a pregnant women's support group get started that would offer support to pregnant women and even young mothers.

If you think someone in your family may benefit from professional assistance, please go to the “*Find a Service Provider*” section of the BHG Web site <http://www.bhg.org> to locate a behavioral healthcare agency in your county.

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