

The prevalence and risk factors for perinatal depression in the South Asian community in the West

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BACKGROUND: In the United States, it is estimated that 13-19% of women experience perinatal depression. While the South Asian immigrant population continues to grow in the Western World, little is known about the experiences of perinatal mental health and its risk factors in this population.

METHODS: We performed a systematic search of articles examining mental health outcomes of South Asians living in the West published after 2000. South Asia was defined as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. The West was defined as the US, Canada, Australia, and Western Europe. Our search strategy had 3 main parts: 1. database search 2. manual article screen and 3. topic based article selection. First, we performed a database search. Next, identified articles were screened by two independent reviewers to confirm inclusion. Discrepancies were decided by a third independent reviewer. Finally, articles were further subdivided according to major topic areas with this review focusing on women's reproductive mental health.

RESULTS: Our search identified 6 papers on perinatal mental health in the South Asian community living in Western Diaspora. Reported prevalence's were between 11-28%, and risk factors included previous depression, social isolation, and socio-economic status.

CONCLUSION: The prevalence and risk factors of perinatal mental illness in the South Asian community are similar that in the United States (Hutchens et al, 2020). Our review highlights that this population is understudied and further research must be done to provide culturally competent care.