

Review

Eating Disorders in Pregnant and Breastfeeding Women: A Systematic Review

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Abstract: *Background:* Pregnancy is a stage associated with various biopsychosocial changes. These changes, along with concerns about keeping an adequate weight, can modulate an individual's risk for psychological disorders, especially eating disorders (EDs). The aim of this review was to investigate the prevalence, associated risks, and consequences of eating disorders in pregnancy and in breastfeeding mothers. *Materials and Methods:* A systematic review was carried out following the PRISMA guidelines in the scientific databases: PubMed, Web of Science, Scopus, and PsycINFO. Search terms related to EDs, pregnancy, and breastfeeding were used. The evaluation of the methodological quality of the studies was carried out using different scales; CASP (Checklist for Cohort Study), NICE (Methodology Checklist for Cohort Study), ARHQ (Methodology Checklist for Cross-Sectional), and NOS (Newcastle-Ottawa Scale for Cohort). *Results:* From 2920 studies, 16 were selected to study EDs in pregnant women and 2 studies in nursing mothers. Most of the studies used questionnaires and scales as tools for the diagnosis of EDs. Binge eating, anxiety, and depression were the most common comorbidities of EDs, accompanied in most cases by excessive concern about weight gain. The consequences of EDs are diverse. The prevalence of EDs in this population is estimated to be 1 out of 20. *Conclusions:* Eating disorders are related to anxiety and depression and have negative consequences for both mothers and fetuses (cesarean, miscarriages, premature births). More research on the field to determine the risk factors for EDs in the population of pregnant and lactating women is needed

Keywords: eating disorder; feeding; psychology; pregnancy

1. Introduction

Pregnancy is a time of change for the maternal organism since it needs to adapt to different biopsychosocial modifications, body composition and nervous system, eating habits, and physical activity, among others [1]. All of these changes can contribute to certain complications and risks of psychiatric disorders in a pregnant woman [2].

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