

## Maternity Blues and Postnatal Depression in Low Risk Mothers

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In order to assess the abnormal mood changes in the low risk Chinese parturients, a preliminary study involving 107 consecutive subjects delivered at Kwong Wah Hospital from December, 1996 to March, 1997 was conducted. The Chinese version of Stein's Daily Scoring System (SDSS) and Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS), both validated locally before, were administered on Day 2 to 4 (SDSS) and 6 weeks postpartum (EPDS). The incidence of maternity blues, as defined by the SDSS score of  $> 8$ , was 12%, 14% and 14% on Day 2, 3 and 4 respectively. Overall, 29% of the subjects had one or more abnormal SDSS scores. 12% were at risk of postpartum depression by adopting the EPDS score of  $> 13$ , of which 7% had prior maternity blues. There was significant correlation between the SDSS score and the EPDS score on Day 2 (Pearson  $r=0.4$ ,  $p<0.0001$ ), Day 3 ( $r=0.28$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and Day 4 ( $r=0.45$ ,  $p<0.0001$ ) postpartum. The underlying risk factors for postpartum depression were addressed. These findings revealed the significant abnormal postpartum mood changes in the low risk Chinese parturients. Although maternity blues was not as common in Hong Kong compared with the Western societies, the risk for postpartum depression was substantial. The SDSS and EPDS were useful screening tools for postpartum depression in our population and the presence of severe blues was a useful predictor for the risk of postnatal depression. (HKJGOM 2000; 1:40-46)

**Keywords :** Maternity blues, postnatal depression, low risk

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