

# Study: Depression in Pregnancy, Low Birth Weight Tied to Biomarker

Women with low levels of BDNF protein have higher risk of depression, low birth weight

The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center

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## NEWS PACKAGE

<b>SUGGESTED TEASE</b>	STILL TO COME, SCIENTISTS LINK A CERTAIN PROTEIN TO DEPRESSION DURING PREGNANCY AND THE RISK FOR LOW BIRTH WEIGHT. DETAILS ON THE CONNECTION AND HOW WOMEN CAN PROTECT THEMSELVES, NEXT IN HEALTH NEWS.
<b>ANCHOR LEAD</b>	DEPRESSION IS A COMMON PROBLEM FOR PREGNANT WOMEN. MORE THAN A HALF MILLION WOMEN ARE TREATED FOR <a href="#">POSTPARTUM DEPRESSION</a> AFTER GIVING BIRTH EACH YEAR IN THE U.S. - AND MANY MORE SUFFER DEPRESSION <u>DURING</u> PREGNANCY. NOW, A NEW STUDY SHEDS LIGHT ON THE ISSUE BY LINKING DEPRESSION DURING PREGNANCY TO A CERTAIN PROTEIN FOUND IN THE BRAIN. <sup>2</sup> WITH MORE ON THE STUDY AND HOW WOMEN CAN PROTECT THEMSELVES, HERE'S CLARK POWELL.
<b>(PACKAGE START) -----</b>	(Nats - Knocking on door) :02
<b>CG: Courtesy: The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center</b> <b>:00 - :03</b>	THOUGH THEY'RE ALMOST INSEPARABLE NOW, CRYSSIE COX FIRST MET HER FRIEND LACE OVER THE PHONE. THEY'RE BOTH A PART OF A SUPPORT GROUP THAT CRYSSIE JOINED AFTER SUFFERING SEVERE DEPRESSION DURING HER PREGNANCY. :10
Cryssie knocking on door	
Both sitting in kitchen with kids	
<b>CG: Cryssie Cox</b> <b>Had depression during pregnancy</b> <b>27.37 - 27.43</b>	<i>"As the pregnancy progressed, with each ultrasound I just got worse and worse and worse."</i> :06
Shot of pregnant woman in exam	THAT'S NOT UNCOMMON. IT'S ESTIMATED AS MANY AS <a href="#">ONE IN SEVEN WOMEN</a> <sup>3</sup> SUFFER DEPRESSION DURING PREGNANCY AND A NEW STUDY LINKS THE PROBLEM TO A PROTEIN FOUND IN THE BRAIN KNOWN AS B-D-N-F. :11
Shot of ultrasound images	
<b>CG: Lisa Christian, PhD</b> <b>Ohio State Wexner Medical Center</b>	<i>"What we saw is that women who had steeper declines from early to later pregnancy had greater risk for</i>

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<p><b>1.04.43 - 1.04.50</b></p> <p>Shot of Christian with colleague</p> <p>Graphic of brain/protein</p>	<p><i>depressive symptoms in late pregnancy.” :07</i></p> <p>RESEARCHER LISA CHRISTIAN LED THE STUDY AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER.</p> <p>SHE SAYS B-D-N-F REGULATES MOOD IN ALL OF US - BUT IN PREGNANT WOMEN, IT’S ALSO VITAL FOR THE PLACENTA AND HELPS WITH THE BABY’S BRAIN DEVELOPMENT.</p> <p>THE MORE B-D-N-F LEVELS DROP DURING PREGNANCY, THE MORE RISKS MAY GO UP. :16</p>
<p><b>Lisa Christian (CG’d earlier)</b> <b>1.04.57 - 1.05.05</b></p> <p>Shots of woman taking pill</p> <p>Shot of Cryssie with kids</p>	<p><i>“In this study we also saw that women who had lower BDNF in the third trimester had higher risk for delivering babies of low birth weight.” :08</i></p> <p>STUDIES SHOW ANTIDEPRESSANTS IMMEDIATELY BOOST B-D-N-F LEVELS, WHICH IS AN OPTION FOR SOME PREGNANT WOMEN. BUT CRYSSIE WAS LEERY OF TAKING MEDICATION FOR FEAR OF THE IMPACT ON HER BABY. :10</p>
<p><b>Lisa Christian (CG’d earlier)</b> <b>1.05.57 - 1.06.02</b></p> <p>Shot of Cryssie and Lace</p> <p>Close up shot of Cryssie</p>	<p><i>“The good news is that another fantastic way to boost BDNF levels is exercise.” :05</i></p> <p>ANOTHER OPTION IS COUNSELING - OR JOINING A SUPPORT GROUP. THAT HAD SUCH AN IMPACT ON LACE VAN EMAN (van-EM-in) THAT SHE NOW VOLUNTEERS FOR ONE - WHICH IS WHERE SHE BECAME A MENTOR FOR HER NEW BEST FRIEND. :11</p>
<p><b>CG: Lace Van Eman</b> <b>Support group volunteer</b> <b>17.56 - 18.05</b></p> <p>Shot of women at table with kids</p>	<p><i>“After I got myself under control, I just wanted to help another mom so she didn’t have to go through what I did.” :09</i></p> <p>AT OHIO STATE WEXNER MEDICAL CENTER, THIS IS CLARK POWELL REPORTING. :03</p>
<p><b>(PACKAGE END) -----</b></p> <p><b>ANCHOR TAG</b></p>	<hr/> <p>IN THIS STUDY, SCIENTISTS TRACKED B-D-N-F LEVELS IN 139 WOMEN BY TAKING BLOOD SAMPLES DURING AND AFTER THEIR PREGNANCIES.</p> <p>AFTER GIVING BIRTH, B-D-N-F LEVELS WENT BACK UP IN ALL WOMEN, BUT TENDED TO BE HIGHER IN BLACK WOMEN THAN IN WHITE WOMEN.</p>

## SOCIAL MEDIA

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<p> <b>Share it! Suggested tweet:</b></p>	<p>Researchers <a href="https://twitter.com/OSUWexMed">@OSUWexMed</a> link depression during pregnancy to certain protein. <a href="http://bit.ly/2i77Utz">http://bit.ly/2i77Utz</a></p>
<p> <b>Suggested post:</b></p>	<p>As many as one in seven women suffer from depression during pregnancy, and now scientists have linked the problem to a certain protein in the brain. Learn more about the impact of the research and how women can protect themselves and their babies during pregnancy here: <a href="http://bit.ly/2i77Utz">http://bit.ly/2i77Utz</a></p>

**EXTRA BITES**

<p><b>CG: Lisa Christian, PhD</b> Ohio State Wexner Medical Center</p>	<p>Dr. Christian talks about depression during pregnancy: <i>1.04.04 "There's a lot of focus on postpartum depression in the literature but there's less attention given to depression actually during pregnancy and during pregnancy about 10-15% of women experience depression. And it's just as critical of a time point in terms of assessing it and treating depressed mood." 1.04.22</i></p> <p>Dr. Christian talks about the benefits of exercise: <i>1.06.13 "Staying physically active, exercising, of course with approval from your physician, during pregnancy can really be a way to benefit your BDNF levels which have benefits for your own mood as well as your baby's development." 1.06.26</i></p> <p>Dr. Christian talks about options to increase BDNF levels: <i>1.09.56 "Antidepressant treatment is certainly appropriate for some women if they're experiencing depressive symptoms and they consult with their physician. But if you can address depressive symptoms through other ways, such as behavioral therapy, cognitive behavioral therapy, like psychotherapy, or exercise, those wouldn't have the side effects and potential risks that a medication would have." 1.10.17</i></p>
<p><b>CG: Cryssie Cox</b> Had depression during pregnancy</p>	<p>Cox talks about her worsening depression during pregnancy: <i>20.36 "Every time I go to the doctor she would ask, 'Do you want medication? How are you doing?' I would decline medication, and toward the end of the last trimester it just got progressively worse." 20.48</i></p> <p>Cox talks about getting the call from a support group member: <i>"I was sitting in my car crying. I was supposed to be on vacation with my family, and I was just sitting in the car crying and she called me."</i></p> <p>Cox talks about the way it felt to join the support group: <i>"It made me feel like human. Like, wow, someone out there's, you know, calling me and saying, you know, 'It'll be okay.'"</i></p>

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<p><b>CG: Lace Van Eman</b> Support group volunteer</p>	<p><i>Van Eman talks about her experience with a support group: "It really helped having someone else on the hotline to just be like, 'no, you're fine. You're going to get through this. We're all here.' Then they have this support group that I also went to where other moms were like, 'No you're not crazy. This is what's happening to us too.'"</i></p> <p>Van Eman offers advice to women who battle depression:: <i>"Ask for help. Because I didn't want anybody to think I needed help. And I was worried about the stigma of it. Now I just don't care. I just want to help another mom so she doesn't have to go through the same thing I did."</i></p>
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### References

<sup>1</sup>*Postpartum Depression*, American Psychological Association, 2016. Online: <http://www.apa.org/pi/women/resources/reports/postpartum-depression.aspx>

<sup>2</sup>*Serum brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF) across pregnancy and postpartum: Associations with race, depressive symptoms and low birth weight*, **Psychoneuroendocrinology**, Volume 74, December 2016. Online: [http://www.psyneuen-journal.com/article/S0306-4530\(16\)30612-6/fulltext](http://www.psyneuen-journal.com/article/S0306-4530(16)30612-6/fulltext)

<sup>3</sup>*Depression during and after pregnancy fact sheet*, Office of Women's Health, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Online: <https://www.womenshealth.gov/publications/our-publications/fact-sheet/depression-pregnancy.html#b>

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