

## Is Neuroticism a Risk Factor for Postpartum Depression?

R. Feki<sup>1</sup>, I. Feki<sup>1</sup>, N. Smaoui<sup>1</sup>, I. Baati<sup>1</sup>, J. Masmoudi<sup>1</sup>, A. Jaoua<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Psychiatrie A, CHU Hédi Chaker Sfax Tunisia, sfax, Tunisia

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### Introduction:

Although the relationship between personality and depressive illness is complex, there is empirical evidence that some personality features such as neuroticism, harm avoidance, introversion, are related to depressive illness risk among postpartum women.

### Objective:

The aim of this study is to estimate the prevalence of postpartum depression and to evaluate its relationship with neuroticism.

### Methodology:

This is a descriptive cross-sectional study regarding 100 parturients during the first week of postpartum recruited in Obstetrics department, Sfax, Tunisia.

The EPDS was used to assess depressive symptoms at early postpartum.

Neuroticism was assessed by using the neuroticism scale of the NEO PI-R.

### Results:

The total sample (n=100) had a mean age of 29 years.

4% had a family psychiatric history and 6% had a personal psychiatric history.

The current pregnancy was undesired in 13% of cases.

Sympathetic signs of pregnancy were reported by 69% of women.

The prevalence of postpartum depression in the first week was 9%.

The occurrence of depression was associated with the existence of mood personal background, a difficulty to accept the pregnancy and an irregular pregnancy monitoring.

Women with depressive symptoms obtained higher scores on neuroticism, depression and angry hostility than women from healthy groups.

Sympathetic signs of pregnancy were significantly related to neuroticism and anxiety.

### Conclusion:

Understanding the effect of neuroticism allows clinicians to detect subgroups of women with an increased vulnerability to postpartum depression who might receive early psychological and psychiatric care.