



# Maternal Safety

Well Mama Team



# Our Team



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**The Agenda**

**01**

**What can affect  
maternal safety?**

**02**

**Deeper dive into the  
factors/Prevention**

**03**

**Activity/Video**

**04**

**Discussions/Questions**



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# What are some factors that can affect maternal safety?



- Mental health before, during, and after birth
- Existing health conditions, including heart conditions that may affect your or your baby's health
- Drug and substance use
- Intimate partner violence/maternal safety
  - → a hidden risk factor for many common health problems for women
- Gun safety/living environment
- Environmental hazards





# Trigger Warning slide

Options for engagement: can tune out, log off at any point



# Intimate Partner Violence



**Definition:** behaviour within an intimate relationship that causes physical, sexual or psychological harm, including acts of physical aggression, sexual coercion, psychological abuse and controlling behaviours. This definition covers violence by both current and former spouses and partners.





# Intimate Partner Violence

## Effects on pregnant people

- Physical injuries
- Asthma
- Stomach-related problems
- Chronic pain
- High blood pressure
- Insomnia
- Mental health conditions such as anxiety, depression, panic, PTSD (Post-traumatic stress disorder)



# Existing Health Conditions

- Existing health conditions that the pregnant person may have can make the pregnancy complex and challenging
- People with pre-existing conditions will need to be monitored in order to reduce complications during the pregnancy





# Existing Health Conditions

Some examples of maternal conditions include:

- Anemia
- Heart conditions
- Mental health conditions
- Diabetes
- Autoimmune disorders
- Etc.



# Mental Health



- Mental Health disorders such as anxiety, depression, and OCD (Obsessive Compulsive Disorder), can happen during, or after pregnancy
- Birth-related post-traumatic stress disorder or a severe but rare condition called postpartum psychosis can happen following childbirth
- Around 1 in 5 women will develop mental health issues when they're pregnant or in the first year after their baby's born



# Mental Health



## Effects on pregnant people

- a persistent feeling of sadness and low mood
- lack of enjoyment and loss of interest in the wider world
- lack of energy and feeling tired all the time
- trouble sleeping at night and feeling sleepy during the day
- difficulty bonding with your baby
- withdrawing from contact with other people
- problems concentrating and making decisions



# Drug and Substance Use

- The use of tobacco, alcohol, or illicit drugs or use of prescription drugs by pregnant people can have severe health consequences
- Regular use of some drugs can cause neonatal abstinence syndrome (NAS) which is when the baby goes through withdrawal upon birth
- It can also the risk of stillbirth



# Drug and Substance Use

Symptoms of drug-withdrawal in a newborn include:

- Blotchy skin coloring
- Diarrhea
- Poor feeding
- Fever
- Birth Defects
- Low Birth weight
- Premature Birth
- Etc..



# Gun Safety



- OBGYN's see and treat a patient population that experience unequal amounts of intimate partner violence and fatality rates associated with intimate partner violence are increased when there are access to guns
- Homicide and suicide are the second and fourth leading cause of injury related deaths among pregnant and postpartum women, and majority of these homicides are carried out with firearms
- Pregnant patients are at higher risks for intimate partner violence



# Environmental Safety



- Exposure to certain substances in the environment when you are pregnant may affect your pregnancy or health of baby
- Toxic substances increase the risk for birth defects, low birth weight, prematurity and miscarriage
- Some chemicals can circulate in the pregnant person's blood, pass through the placenta, and reach the developing fetus



# Environmental Safety



## Things to Avoid when Pregnant:

- Lead: Ex.) Batteries, water from lead pipes, and gasoline
- Mercury: Ex.) liquid in thermometer, lightbulbs, and batteries
- Paint thinners
- Lawn chemicals, weed killers, and pesticides,
- X-rays
- Hot Tubs - extreme heat can cause birth defects
- Cleaners that are toxic or have harsh fumes





# Video on IPV



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VuMCzU54334>



# Activity: How would you help?

- A neighbor of yours, asks for advice about their partner who is emotionally abusing them, what are some symptoms that can happen in your neighbor if this continues?
- Your friend asks what are some existing conditions that I need to get monitored during pregnancy
- A relative asks what are some effects of mental health disorders that can happen during pregnancy?
- What are some symptoms of drug and substance abuse that you would tell someone who is pregnant about?
- What advice would you give your friend who on what things to avoid during pregnancy, to keep them safe?





# Let's Talk!




Do you have any questions or experiences that you'd like to share?

# Resources



- [National Domestic Violence Hotline](#) - 800-799-SAFE (7233) or Text LOVEIS to 22522
  - [Love is Respect National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline](#) - 866-331-9474 or TTY 866-331-8453
  - [Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network's \(RAINN\) National Sexual Assault Hotline](#)
  - [National Resource Center on Domestic Violence](#)
  - [Futures Without Violence](#)
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# Thanks



Do you have any questions?

Doula Website

Doula Email

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