Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence of anxiety and depressive symptoms among obese pregnant and postpartum women: a case-control intervention study

Version: 1 Date: 17 September 2010

Reviewer: Bryndis Bjork Asgeirsdottir

Reviewer's report:

Major Compulsory Revisions
None

Minor Essential Revisions
1. Abstract: Background – It would be clearer if the first sentence would state the aim of the study.
2. Abstract: Methods – logistic regression was (not has been) – see also page 9
3. Abstract: Methods – It needs to be stated more clearly that there were three time points of measurement. The sentence "with the three BAI and EPDS measurements" is confusing for the reader, i.e. which three measures are being referred to.
4. Abstract: Results – In the sentence “Six percent in the intervention group and 4 % control group” it seems that some words are missing, for example “Six percent in the intervention group and 4 % in the control group”.
5. Abstract: Results – The last sentence could be improved. When describing the results for the demographic variables between groups no time of measurement is stated, this makes the sentence unclear. Also, does the weight gain refer to BMI?
6. Background: Line 19, 9.2 % not 9,2 %.
7. Background: Lines 15-19. How can this difference in prevalence (30.8% to 9.2%) between studies be explained? This needs a further discussion in the background and in the Discussion in relation to the results of the study. Furthermore, what did the results for the study referred to as 15 indicate with regards to the relation between depressive symptoms and BMI? Has any study showed a relation between BMI and postpartum depression?
8. Background: The aim of the study could be more clearly stated. Also it needs a little more detailed discussion in which time points the researchers expect difference in depressive and anxiety symptoms, i.e. on all three measures, on two of them or one. Furthermore, it needs to be argued why the authors expect these differences in these time points.
9. Background: Line 10 on medical complications is somewhat standing alone in this paragraph. Maybe it could be moved further down in the text but at least it should be discussed in a little more detail.
10. Materials and method: Measures – Some measures are missing here. The socio-demographic measures for example need to be described.

11. Materials and method: Statistics – It is unclear here which of the variables were continuous and which were categorical. For what was the t-test used?

12. Results: Anxiety symptoms – Page 11, Line 2, Multivariate analysis – is this the logistic regression? It would be clearer to use the exact label used in the methods section accordingly.

13. Discussion: Line 10 – 11, about 4-5% of all women had symptoms of anxiety; 4-6% had symptoms of depression? These percentages are not correct are they?

14. Discussion: Page 16, the paragraph on limitations could be more detailed. In particular the implications / possible biases related to the limitations mentioned could be discussed in more detail.

15. Discussion: Conclusion – the conclusions in the abstract and in the discussion are somewhat different. Can you conclude that neither weight gain nor a weight gain restriction program during pregnancy seems to influence the prevalence of symptoms in general? In this study all the participants are obese.

16. Discussion: The discussion could be made more readable and interesting. The authors could connect their results better to the existing literature and point out the contribution their study is making.

Discretionary Revisions

1. Materials and method: It would be better to call this chapter Method.

2. Materials and method: Subjects – Line 1, paraphrase, a total of 317 women were registered.


4. Materials and method: Measures – Line 11, was the variable a dichotomous variable 0=no symptoms and 1=indicating the presence of symptoms? This could be described in a little more detail for both the anxiety and depressive symptoms.

5. Materials and method: Measures – Line 18, how were the results for the validity test, conducted on the Swedish version?

6. Materials and method: Statistics – It would have been interesting to test the hypotheses of differences also with regards to severity of depressive and anxiety symptoms as well as with regards to prevalence, using t-tests and linear regression analysis.


8. Results: Depressive symptoms – Page 12, Line 9 – 10. Is it correct to have a colon here?

9. Discussion: Page 14, Line 19-21, paraphrase, “constitute a stress on the individual that has ……”

10. Discussion: Page 14, Line 23, high levels of or symptoms, not only “high
anxiety"
11. Discussion: Page 15, line 20, paraphrase, “the women were asked to grade her”
12. Discussion: Page 15, line 22-23, paraphrase, “Answer on level moderately or more…”
13. Discussion: Page 16, line 9-10, studies 36-38 are referred to but their results are not discussed and connected to the results of the current study?
14. Discussion: Conclusion - Some practical implications would be informative in the conclusion.

Level of interest: An article of importance in its field

Quality of written English: Needs some language corrections before being published

Statistical review: Yes, and I have assessed the statistics in my report.

Declaration of competing interests:

'I declare that I have no competing interests'