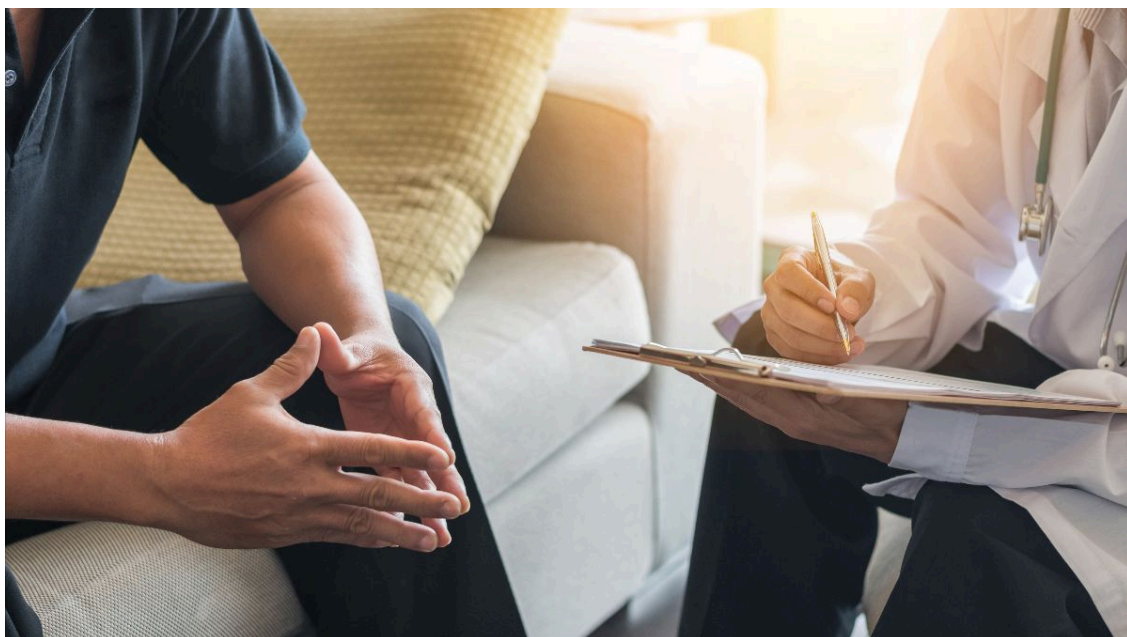


June is Men's Health Month



Jennifer Boland, MSN, RNC-OB, C-EFM

June is Men's Health Month and is nationally recognized as a time to bring awareness to men's health and wellness. June is also the month where fathers are recognized and celebrated. Several studies are bringing to light the impact that perinatal mental health has on father's and that it is not specific to just mothers. Bringing awareness to paternal perinatal mental health is key to improving outcomes for fathers, children, and families. The Maternal Mental Health Leadership Alliance (MMHLA) has put together a fact sheet on Paternal Mental Health and published it in June 2024. The fact sheet includes key facts, risk factors and causes, treatment options, and resources. Below are just a few highlights from the fact sheet. The fact sheet can be found [here](#).



A few highlights taken from the MMHLA Fact Sheet on Paternal Mental Health include (Fisher & Singley, 2024):

- 1 in 10 fathers will experience depression or anxiety during pregnancy or the first year following pregnancy.
- Men experiencing anxiety or depression are more likely than women to cite physical symptoms and show irritability, anger, aggression, and frustration, which can lead to isolating, withdrawing, risk-taking, avoidance, and substance use.
- Untreated paternal depression can have long-term negative impact on the child's development and health across multiple domains.
- Maternal Depression is the most important risk factor for paternal depression.
- Fathers experiencing anxiety or depression often state stress as a major contributing factor.
- Other causes and risk factors include personal or family history of depression or mental illness, lack of social support, issues or concerns with baby, and issues or concerns with partner.
- Words often used to describe the feelings of fathers experiencing anxiety and depression include feeling overwhelmed, invisible, resentful, forgotten, trapped, confused, and helpless.
- Treatment options include adequate sleep, exercise, and nutrition, practical and emotional support, perinatal psychoeducation, therapy or counseling, medication, or any combination of the above.
- Postpartum Support International has a webpage dedicated to support for fathers ([LINK](#))
- A list of books about fathers and their mental health is also listed on the fact sheet.

If left untreated, paternal depression can have a negative impact on the family. One way we can help is to educate ourselves and recognize that Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorder (PMAD) affects both mothers and fathers. Early screening can also assist in early recognition and treatment.

Join us in recognizing June as Men's Health Month and celebrating men's health and wellness.

References

- Fisher, S. D. & Singley, D. B. (2024, November 19). Supporting New Fathers: An Overview of Paternal Mental Health Statistics, Insights, and

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- Walsh, T. B., & Garfield, C. F. (2024). Perinatal Mental Health: Father Inclusion at the Local, State, and National Levels. *Health Affairs*, 590-596.

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