

Chronicity, severity, and timing of maternal depressive symptoms: Relationships with child outcomes at age 5.

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Abstrak

The relationships between severity, chronicity, and timing of maternal depressive symptoms and child outcomes were examined in a cohort of 4,953 children. Mothers provided self-reports of depressive symptoms during pregnancy, immediately postpartum, and when the child was 6 months old and 5 years old. At the age 5 follow-up, mothers reported on children's behavior and children completed a receptive vocabulary test. Results suggest that both the severity and the chronicity of maternal depressive symptoms are related to more behavior problems and lower vocabulary scores in children. The interaction of severity and chronicity of maternal depressive symptoms was significantly related to higher levels of child behavior problems. Timing of maternal symptoms was not significantly related to child vocabulary scores, but more recent reports of maternal depressive symptoms were associated with higher rates of child behavior problems.