

P-997 - BARRIERS AND ENABLERS TO EXERCISE IN A SAMPLE OF POSTPARTUM WOMEN IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA: A MULTI-METHOD APPROACH ABSTRACT

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Introduction: For most women in the postpartum period, six to 52 weeks after childbirth, participation in exercise is very limited. More information is needed to fully understand the specific barriers and enablers to exercise during this period.

Objectives: Explore the daily experience of physical activity in postpartum women. Investigate the key barriers and enablers to physical activity in the postpartum period

Aims: A qualitative approach in the form of a semi-structured interview with thematic analysis was used

Methods: This study used a multi-method approach. Postpartum women recruited from child health clinics were sent a package of standardized questionnaires to investigate the barriers that affected their exercise participation. In addition, 14 postpartum women who participated in the survey were contacted for an interview in order to further discuss exercise barriers and enablers.

Results: For the 150 women who responded to the survey lack of confidence and lack of time had the greatest impact on participation in sport and exercise. When daily physical activity participation was assessed lack of information, lack of confidence, lack of knowledge were statistically significant. The qualitative data showed that mothers may be able to participate more in exercise if they had greater social support, particularly partner support. The participants suggested that environmental factors like increased knowledge and access to appropriate exercise programs, either in the home or outside, could potentially enable increased exercise.

Conclusion: New mothers require substantial social support and specifically tailored exercise programs to enable them to access the physiological and psychological benefits of exercise.