

# The needs of women in the postpartum period: a scoping review

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## Abstract

### Introduction

The postpartum period is a critical period for woman, newborn and family.<sup>1</sup> It's considered a challenging period time that implies emotional, physical, social and spiritual changes<sup>2,3</sup>, and an adaptation to the new maternal role. To have a positive postpartum experience, women must receive information, validation and support consistently from health professionals.<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, this is not always found, as assistance is more focused on the newborn, forgetting the needs of the woman.<sup>4</sup>

### Aim

Map the published scientific evidence about women's needs in the postpartum period.

### Method

A literature review was performed according to the Scoping Method Review (SR)<sup>5</sup> with research in three databases MEDLINE Complete, MedicLatina and CINAHL Complete databases. Underlying the question of research, according to the mnemonic population, concept and context<sup>5</sup>, "What are the needs of women in the postpartum period?". For the selection of the articles, the inclusion and exclusion criteria were defined. In total 6,012 articles were identified. After the exclusion of the duplicate articles and the reading of the title (5686), were selected 326 articles for reading the summary and of these, 110 were elected for full reading. At the end of the process, 20 articles were included in the SR.

### Results and Discussion

The authors report that women don't feel prepared for the postpartum experience and various needs were identified various needs, divided into four categories: sharing, support, care and preparation for the postpartum period.

There's the need for sharing with friends, family and support groups, they mention the experience of childbirth and parenting, concerns and feelings, considering that it promotes the tranquility of the postpartum women regarding their skills.

Support is important in developing maternal skills and confidence, but also a barrier, being partner, family, friends and health professionals considered crucial elements.

Postpartum care must focus on the needs of the postpartum woman and not just in the newborn. Health education allows to empower the woman to care for the newborn, but also to self-care.

The preparation of the couple during pregnancy allows them to anticipate needs, develop and train parental skills.

### Conclusions

Several unattended needs are identified in the postpartum period. The care needs to start in the prenatal period through health education and parental skills training, in order to facilitate the postpartum experience and the transition to parenting.

### Keywords

Postpartum Period; Health Services Needs and Demand; Women; Infant; Newborn.

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