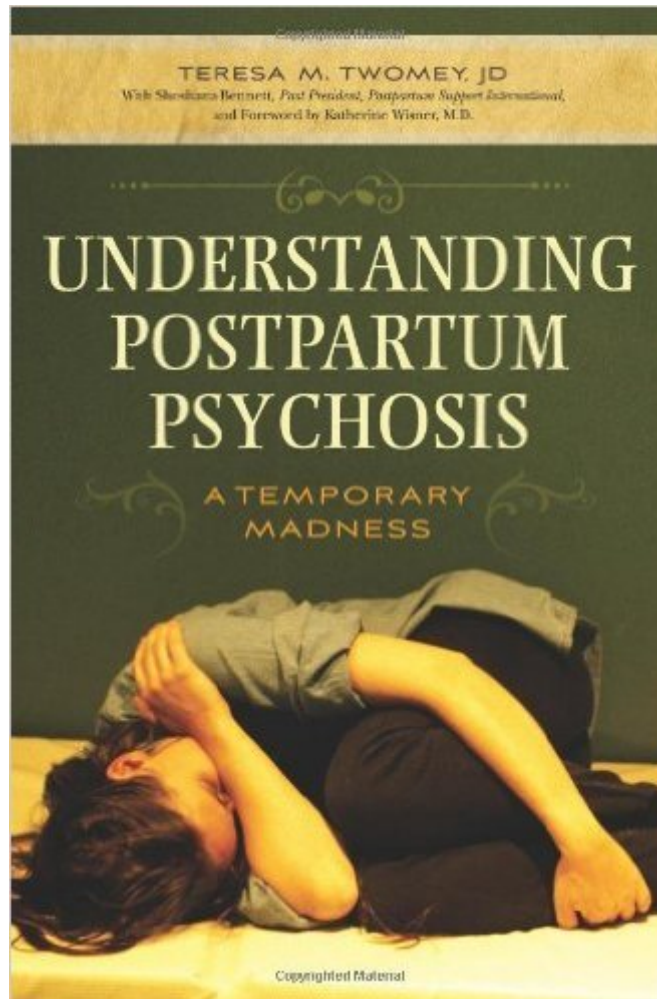


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# Understanding Postpartum Psychosis: A Temporary Madness



## Synopsis

Offering an understanding of postpartum psychosis, this riveting book explains what happens and why during this temporary and dangerous disorder that develops for some women rapidly after childbirth. Most of us are familiar with the baby blues, a passing sadness that strikes 50 to 75 percent of new mothers after delivery. And most of us understand postpartum depression, a sadness post-delivery that lingers for weeks or months for an estimated one in every 10 new mothers. But a more serious form of disorder that strikes up to one in every 500 is postpartum psychosis - triggering severe agitation, confusion, insomnia, hallucinations, delusions, mania, and possible thoughts of suicide or murder. Every year, women in the United States and around the world kill their babies, children, and themselves as a result of this mental illness. Here, author Twomey, an official with Postpartum Support International, gives us insight into the psychological, personal, medical, legal, and historical perspectives on this little-understood mental illness, which is both preventable and treatable. While most women who suffer postpartum psychosis eventually recover without harming anyone, they most often do so in silence. Paranoia is a common symptom, explains Twomey, and that moves women to hide their symptoms from everyone around them. The woman can hence appear normal, but be putting both herself and her baby at risk. We can prevent and treat this, but we need to recognize it by better screening of women postpartum, says Twomey.

## Book Information

File Size: 1503 KB

Print Length: 173 pages

Publisher: Praeger; 1 edition (March 20, 2009)

Publication Date: March 20, 2009

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B002AS9QY6

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Enhanced Typesetting: Not Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #1,208,601 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #102

inÂ Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Mental Health > Postpartum Depression #164 inÂ Kindle

## Customer Reviews

Teresa Twomey's book is an outstanding resource. As my colleague/author Sharon Gerdes wrote in her fantastic review of this book, "it's the definitive book on postpartum psychosis." Twomey's writing is clear, her research accurate, and her case studies thoughtfully chosen and presented to personalize this often-demonized disorder. Twomey's co-author Dr. Shoshana Bennett is greatly respected within the perinatal mental health community, and her contributions to the book are excellent. I also greatly appreciate the fact that Twomey writes about the perinatal mood and anxiety disorder (PMAD) that I've lived with since 2007: bipolar, peripartum onset (postpartum bipolar disorder). This condition is rarely written about knowledgeably, so I was pleased to see my postpartum mood disorder included in the book. Postpartum bipolar can often manifest with postpartum psychosis, but it also presents by itself as it did with me. My postpartum bipolar disorder, or bipolar, peripartum onset is rare but it definitely happens. As I mentioned before, while postpartum psychosis can be accompanied by bipolar, peripartum onset, that's not always the case. At age thirty-seven I had my second baby. I walked into the maternity ward in labor with no previous diagnosis of bipolar disorder. Within 24 hours of my daughter's birth I was hypomanic and hypergraphic (compulsive writing); no one recognized I was in trouble until six weeks later when I was acutely manic. It was then when I voluntarily admitted myself for hospitalization and received an official diagnosis of bipolar, peripartum onset with no psychotic features. That was in 2007, and I've finally achieved mood stability and a full, wonderful life.

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