

Nighttime Breastfeeding and Postpartum Depression



Kathleen Kendall-Tackett, Ph.D., IBCLC, FAPA

The Problem of Fatigue

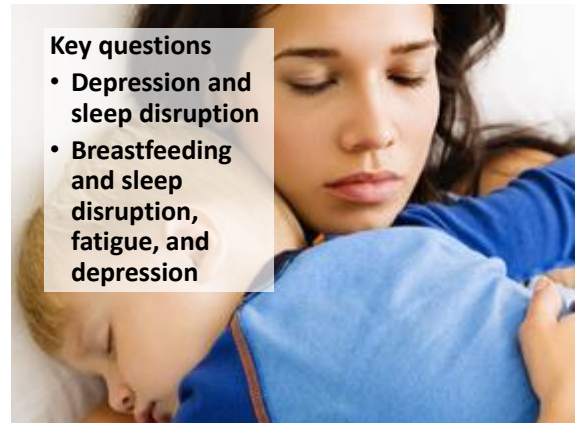
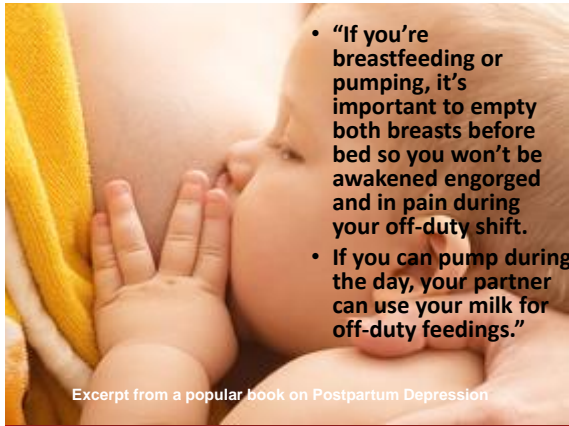


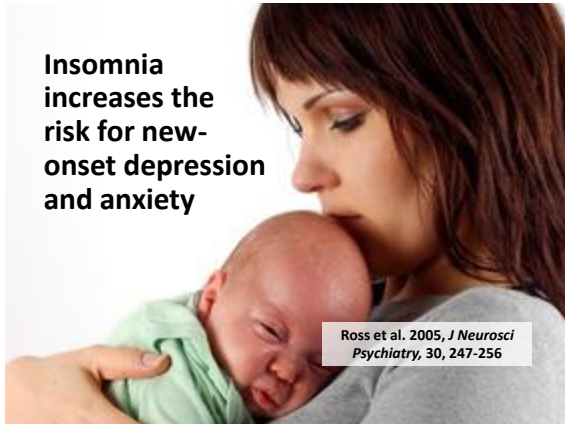
- “Even for moms with fresh buns out of the oven, sleeping is not a luxury—it’s a medical necessity.”
- “Humans need 8.4 hours of uninterrupted sleep per night in order to function at their best (*the key word being uninterrupted*).”

Excerpt from a popular book on Postpartum Depression

- “Sleep in a separate area away from the baby and the adult on duty
- Use earplugs and a white noise machine...if necessary. The goal is to make sure that you aren’t hearing the baby or other noises so you can achieve uninterrupted sleep”

Excerpt from a popular book on Postpartum Depression





Insomnia increases the risk for new-onset depression and anxiety

Ross et al. 2005, *J Neurosci Psychiatry*, 30, 247-256



Sleep disturbances are common symptoms of psychiatric disorders

Ross et al. 2005, *J Neurosci Psychiatry*, 30, 247-256



▪ PPD at 3 months for mothers who

- Slept <4 hours
- Napped <60 min

Prospective study of 112 mothers

Goyal et al. 2009, *Arch Women's Ment Health*, 12, 229-237



Study of 2,830 women at 7 weeks postpartum

Poor sleep was an independent risk factor for depression

Dorheim et al. 2009, *Sleep*, 32, 847-855



Factors associated with poor sleep

- Depression
- Previous sleep problems
- Primiparity
- Younger or male infant
- **Not exclusively breastfeeding**

Dorheim et al. 2009, *Sleep*, 32, 847-855



Does depression impact sleep?

Sleep → **PPD**

← **PPD**

Posmontier 2006, *JOGNN*, 37, 722-737

Sleep of depressed mothers

- Longer sleep latency (25 v 20 minutes)
- Shorter sleep duration
- More daytime dysfunction

Study of 163 Taiwanese mothers 13-20 pp

Huang et al. 2004, *J Nurs Res*, 12, 287-295

Depressed women had

- Longer sleep latency
- Wake after sleep onset
- Poorer sleep efficiency

23 women with PPD, 23 without, 6-26 weeks pp

Posmontier 2008, *JOGNN*, 37, 722-737

“For new mothers, a complaint of trouble falling asleep may be the most relevant screening question in relation to their risk for postpartum depression”

Goyal et al. 2007, *J Perinat Neonat Nurs*, 21, 123-129

253 pregnant women (83 depressed)

- Higher NE and cortisol levels
- Newborns of depressed mothers had more sleep disturbances and less time in deep sleep

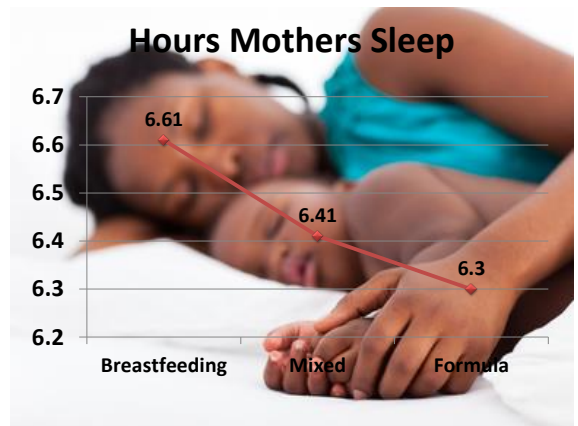
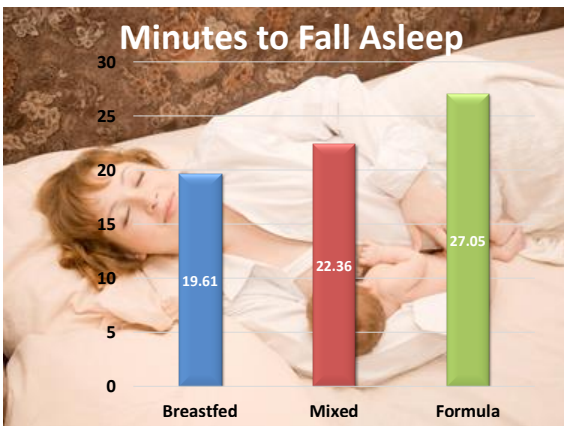
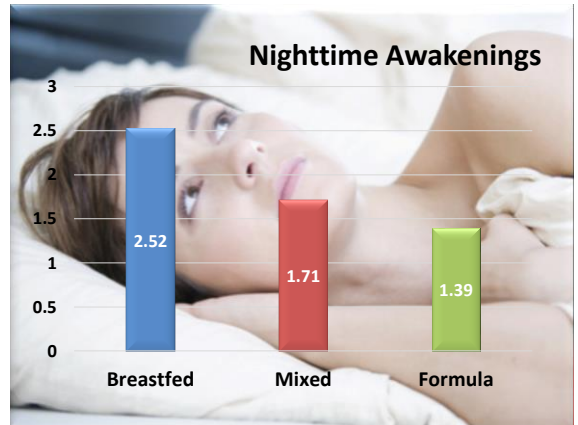
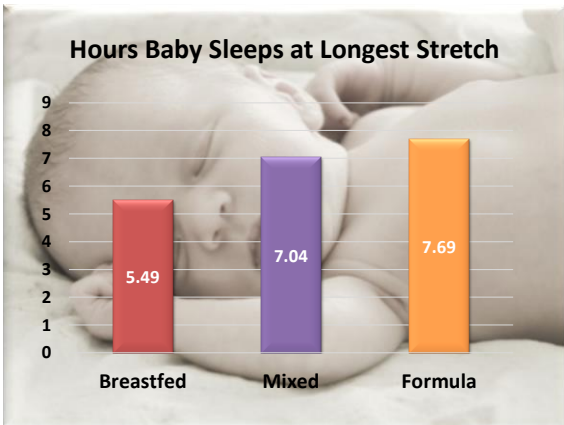
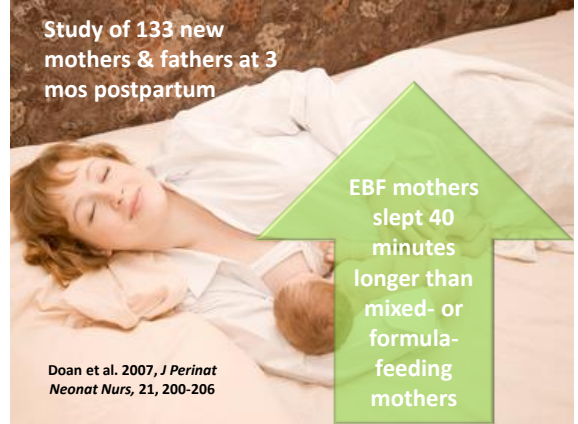
Field et al. 2007, *Infant Behav Dev*, 30, 127-133

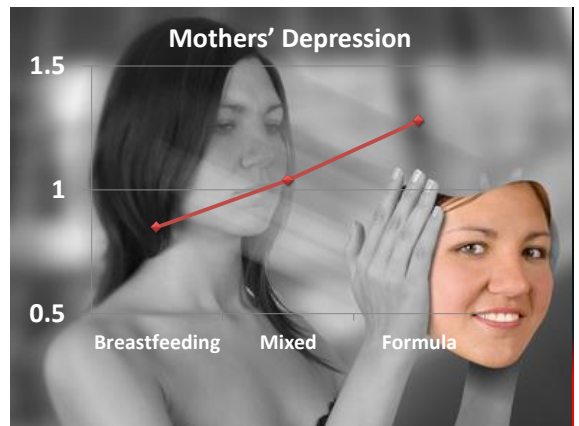
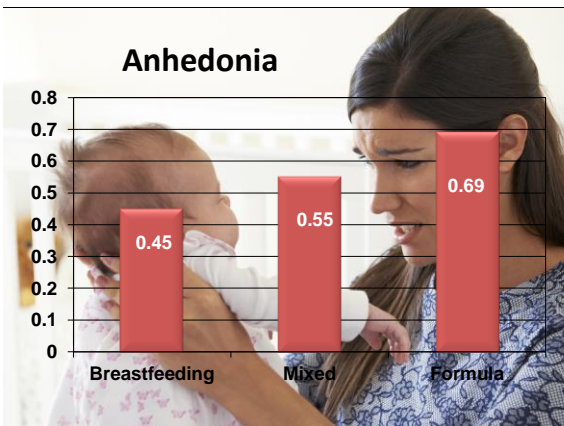
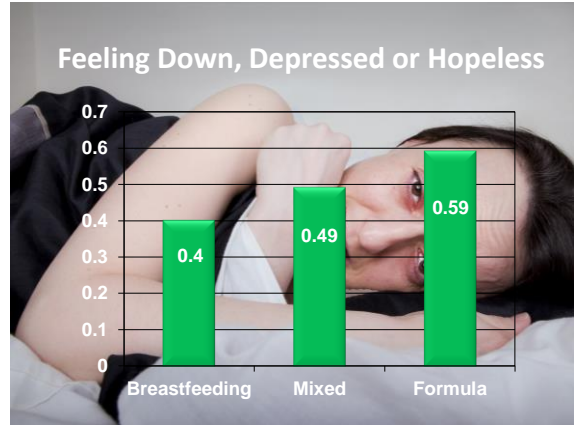
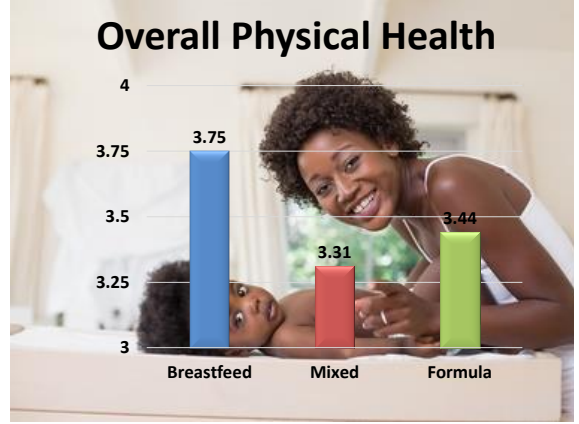
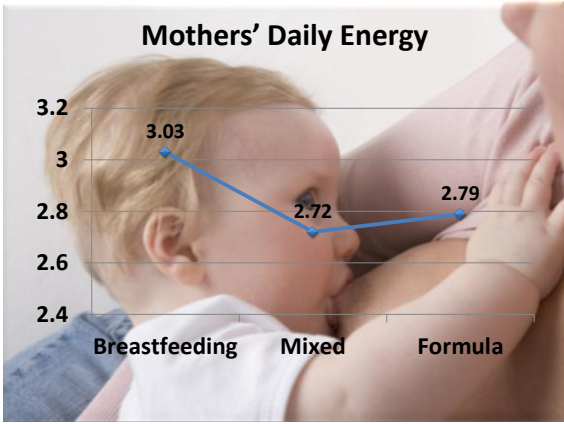
Sleep problems for 93% mothers, 60% fathers

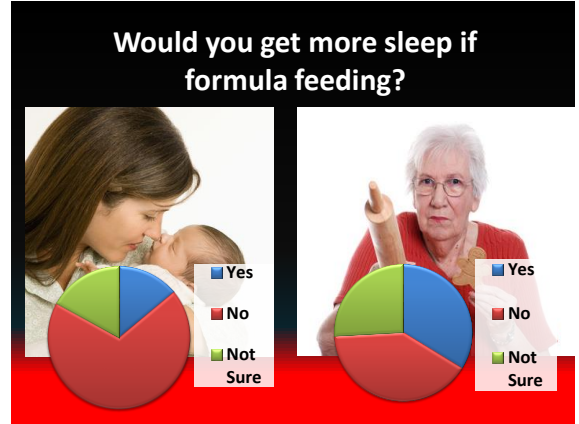
- Difficulty falling asleep
- Waking during the night
- Total lower sleep time for mothers

Study of Chinese-American mothers and fathers of babies in the NICU (N=22, 17)

Lee et al. 2007, *Issues Ment Health Nurs*, 28, 593-605





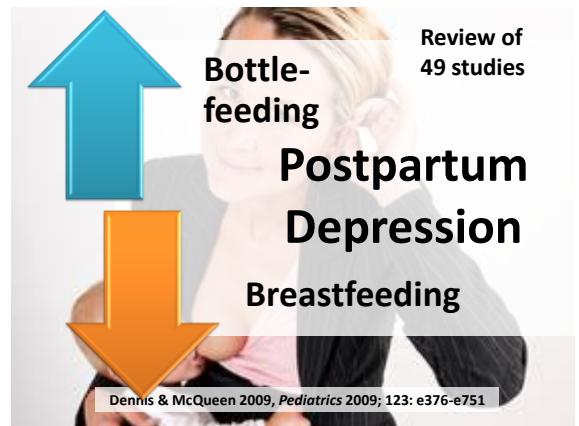


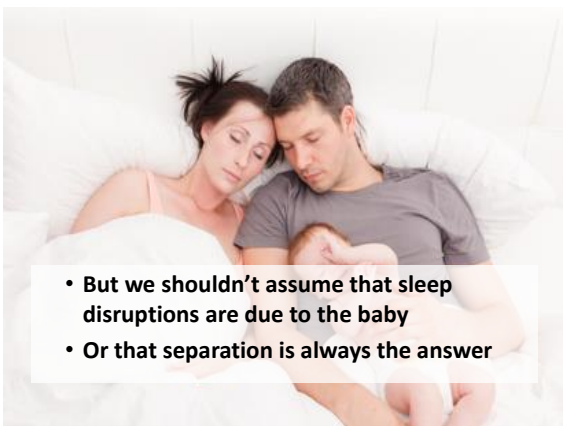
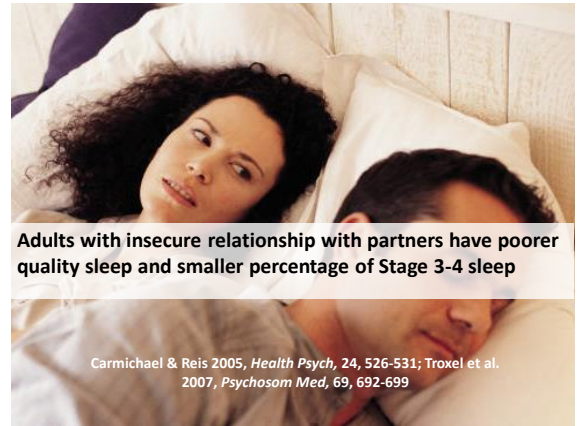
“Using supplementation as a coping strategy for minimizing sleep loss can actually be detrimental because of its impact on prolactin hormone production and secretion.....”

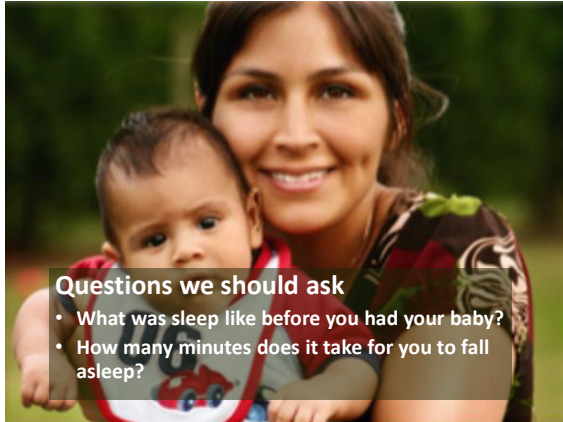
“.... Maintenance of breastfeeding as well as deep restorative sleep stages may be greatly compromised for new mothers who cope with infant feedings by supplementing in an effort to get more sleep time.” (p. 201)

Doan et al. 2007, J Perinat Neonat Nurs, 21, 200-206

A couple of other caveats

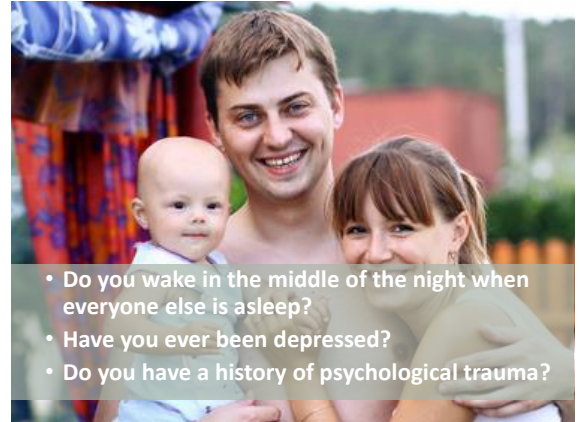






Questions we should ask

- What was sleep like before you had your baby?
- How many minutes does it take for you to fall asleep?

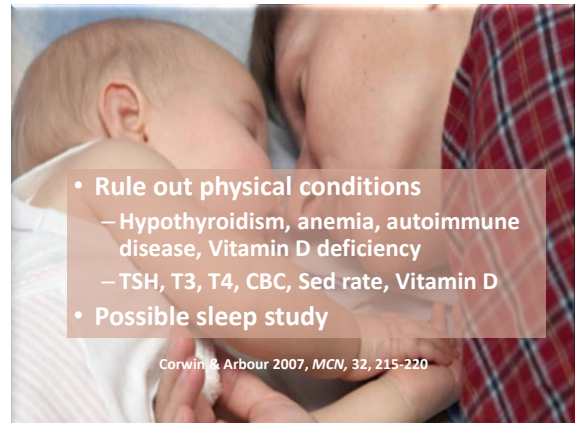


- Do you wake in the middle of the night when everyone else is asleep?
- Have you ever been depressed?
- Do you have a history of psychological trauma?



Possible sleep medications

- Some antidepressants
- Atypical antipsychotics
- Sleeping pill
- No benzodiazepines for trauma survivors
- No bedsharing with sleep medications



- Rule out physical conditions
 - Hypothyroidism, anemia, autoimmune disease, Vitamin D deficiency
 - TSH, T3, T4, CBC, Sed rate, Vitamin D
- Possible sleep study

Corwin & Arbour 2007, *MCN*, 32, 215-220



- Possible limiting nighttime feeds
 - 4-5 hours better than 8 hours
- Informed consent



- We can also provide hope
- It won't always be this way

