

AUSTRALIAN STUDY- 2008

Dingle, K., Alati, R., Clavarino, A. et al. (2008) Pregnancy loss and psychiatric disorders in young women: an Australian birth cohort study. *The British Journal of Psychiatry* 193: 455-460.

These authors reported that women with an abortion history had almost twice the risk for 12 month depression compared to women who did not report an abortion.

Abortion history was also associated with an almost 3 times greater risk of experiencing a lifetime illicit drug use disorder (not including marijuana) and twice the risk for an alcohol use disorder.

These results were computed after controls were instituted for maternal and familial factors, pre-existing behavior problems, substance misuse and demographic characteristics.

U.S. STUDY- 2007

Rees, D. I. & Sabia, J. J. (2007). The relationship between abortion and depression: New Evidence from the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study. *Medical Science Monitor* 13(10): 430-436.

These authors employed a large representative sample of U.S. women who had recently given birth, the Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study, to examine the extent to which abortion increases risk for Major Depression.

Women who had an abortion were at a higher risk for major depression compared to women who had not become pregnant. Specifically, after adjusting for race, ethnicity, age, education, household income, number of children, and prior depression, abortion was associated with more than a two-fold increase in the likelihood of having depressive symptoms at second follow-up.

NEW ZEELAND STUDY- 2008

Abortion and mental health disorders: evidence from a 30-year longitudinal study; David M. Fergusson, L. John Horwood and

Joseph M. Boden; The British Journal of Psychiatry (2008) 193, 444-451. doi:

10.1192/bjp.bp.108.056499

Background

Research on the links between abortion and mental health has been limited by design problems and relatively weak evidence.

Aims

To examine the links between pregnancy outcomes and mental health outcomes.

Method

Data were gathered on the pregnancy and mental health history of a birth cohort of over 500 women studied to the age of 30.

Results

After adjustment for confounding, abortion was associated with a small increase in the risk of mental disorders; women who had had abortions had rates of mental disorder that were about 30% higher. There were no consistent associations between other pregnancy outcomes and mental health. Estimates of attributable risk indicated that exposure to abortion accounted for 1.5% to 5.5% of the overall rate of mental disorders.

Conclusions

The evidence is consistent with the view that abortion may be associated with a small increase in risk of mental disorders. Other pregnancy outcomes were not related to increased risk of mental health problems.