

# COPE

Centre of Perinatal Excellence

## Applied Skills in Perinatal Mental Health Assessment and Care

### LESSON NOTEBOOK


Module 1 | Lesson 3

Perinatal Mental Health  
Biopsychosocial Model



Module 1: Lesson 3  
Perinatal Mental Health  
Biopsychosocial Model





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Lesson Overview

- Perinatal Mental Health Biopsychosocial Model
  - How it can be used
  - Interaction and impact of factors
  - Identify key contributors
  - Promote expansive thinking

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- Eclectic
  - ~ combine sound evidence-based practice with clinically indicated supportive therapy

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Module 1: Lesson 3



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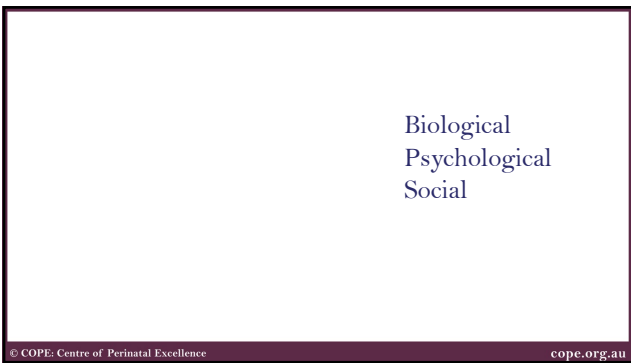
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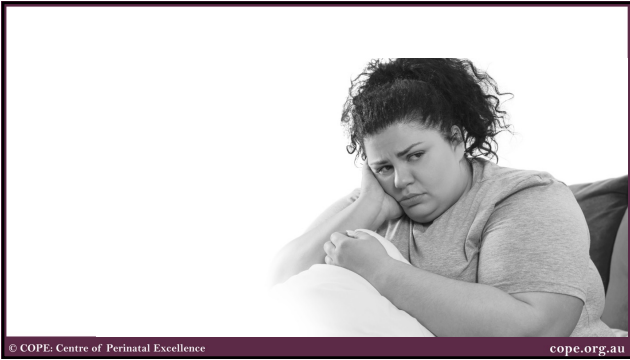
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Module 1: Lesson 3



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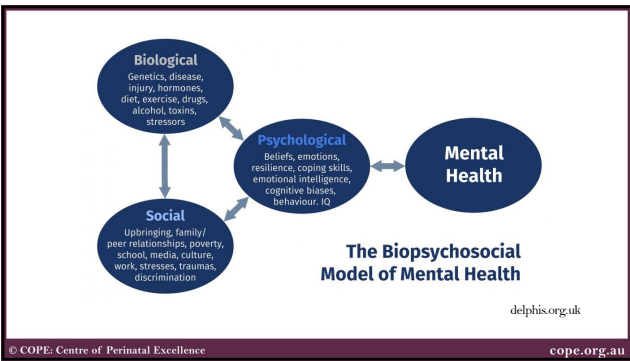
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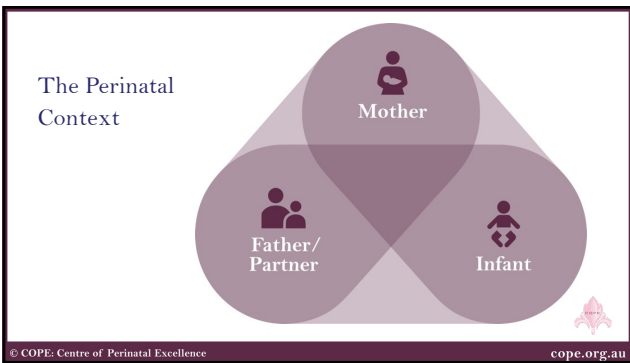
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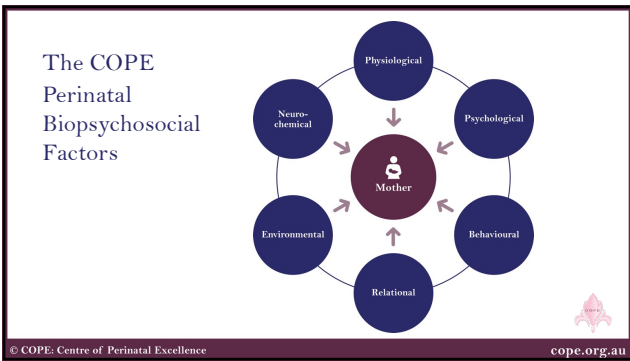
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Module 1: Lesson 3




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**Psychological Adjustments**



- Adjustments to various stages in perinatal journey
- Changes in lifestyle / experience of losses
- Somatic changes in body
- Changes in relationships (partners, extended family and friends)
- Renegotiating prior social roles (eg. employment changes)
- Interplay of other factors (eg. cultural representations of pregnancy)

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**Perceptions**



- Perception of identity
- How is fetus gestated in mother's mind and how the infant is perceived
- Childbirth experience
- Body image – antenatal and postnatal
- Perception of support; partner, healthcare providers etc.

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**Stress Response / Coping Style**



- Negative life events
- Positive life events
- Perinatal specific

Planning and preparation  
Avoidance  
Spiritual Coping

(Lobel and Yali, 1994)

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Cognitions 

- Cognitive function, dysfunctional thought processes and coping styles
- Memory and Attention
- Self-appraisal in the motherhood role
- 'Baby brain' - is it a thing?
- Black and white thinking and babies

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Personality Traits 

- Perfectionism

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the truth is  
no one tells you  
how hard it can be



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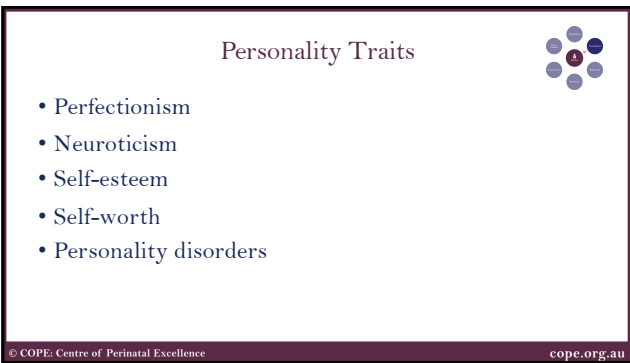
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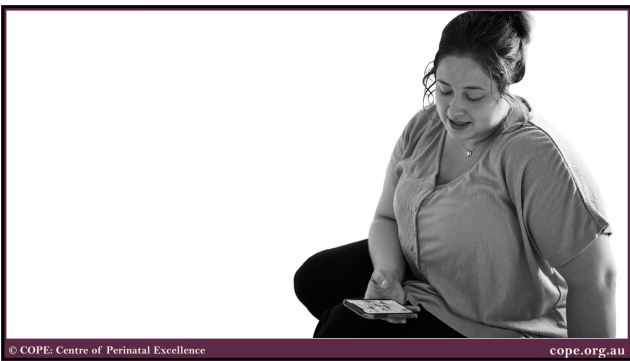
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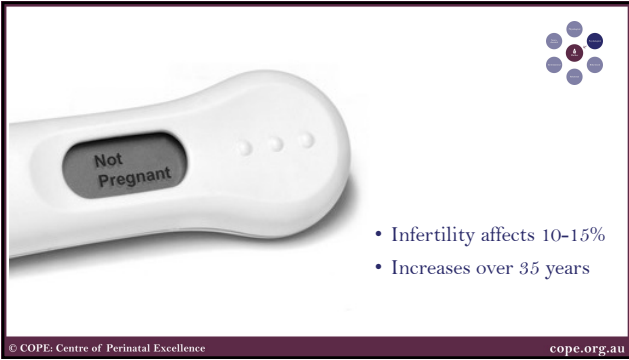
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- Infertility affects 10-15%
- Increases over 35 years

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### Conception Journey



- Previous diagnosis (infertility etc)
- Previous losses
- Relationship – communication, navigating the roller coaster
- Personality style – how does the woman approach
- ART and IVF
- Comparison and coping with presence of 'successful pregnancies'
- Secondary infertility

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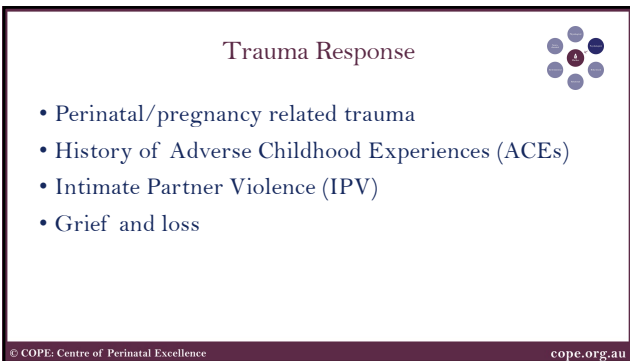
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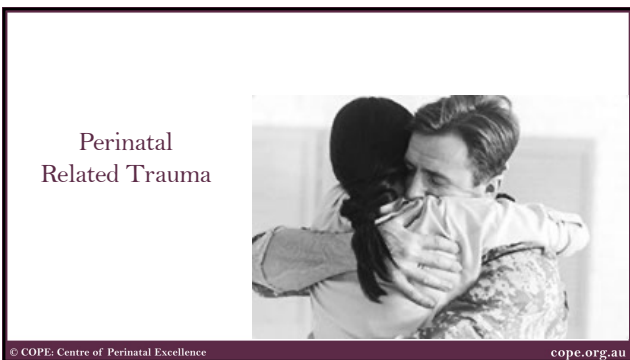
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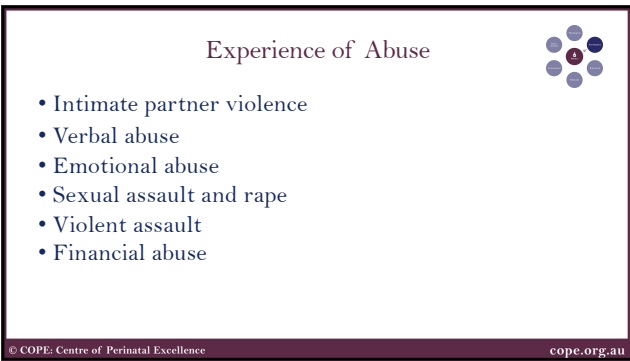
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### Grief and Loss

- Miscarriage
- Stillbirth
- Neonatal loss and infant loss
- Pregnancy after loss
- Difficult neonatal diagnoses
- Loss of a loved one



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### Psychological



- Psychological adjustments
- Perceptions
- Stress response and coping style
- Cognitions - "baby brain"
- Personality Traits
- Expectations & Ideals
- Conception journey
- Trauma, Grief and loss

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### Behavioural Factors



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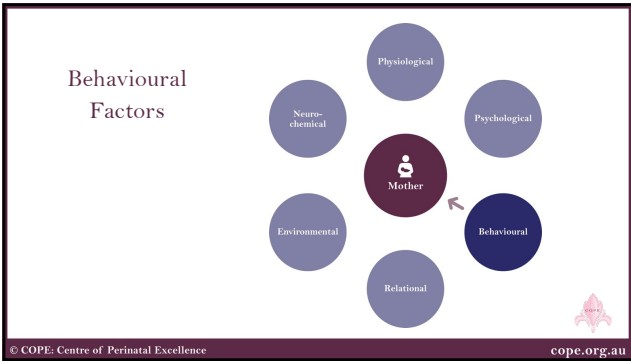
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Module 1: Lesson 3



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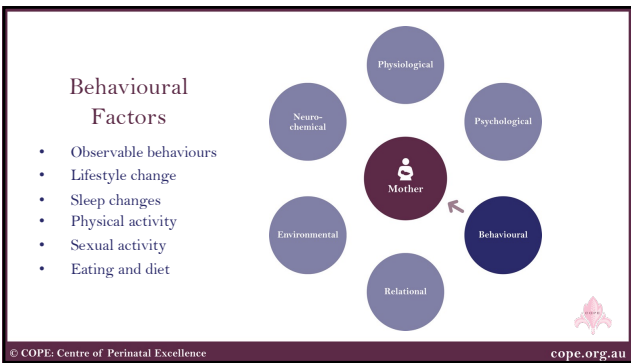
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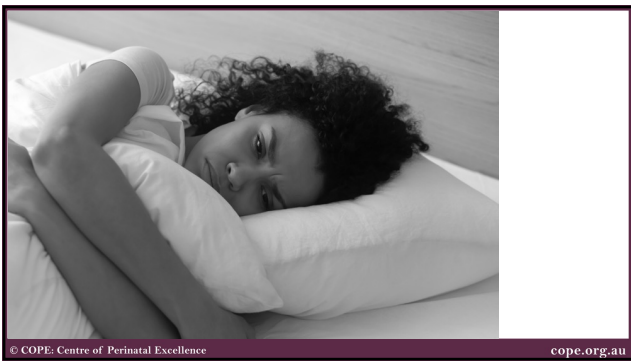
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Lifestyle Change



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Sleep



- History and coping mechanisms in the past
- Infant sleep patterns
- Partner response to sleep disturbance

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Physical Activity



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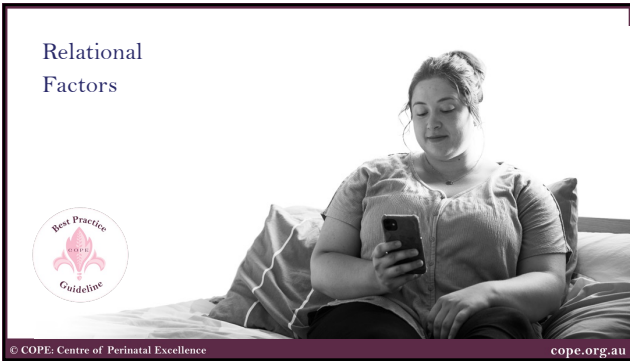
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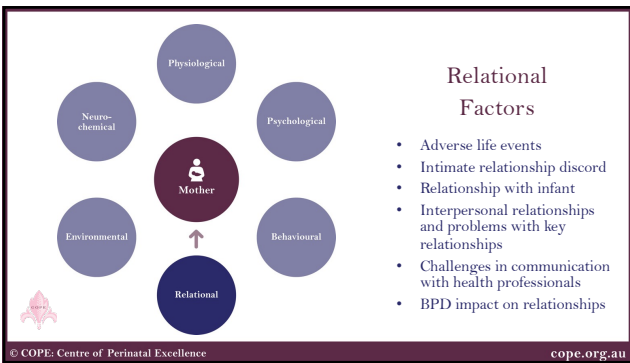
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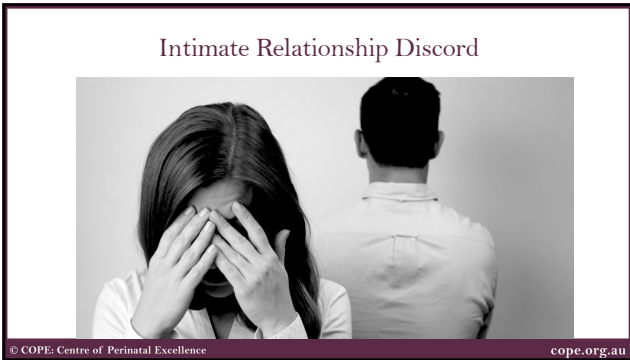
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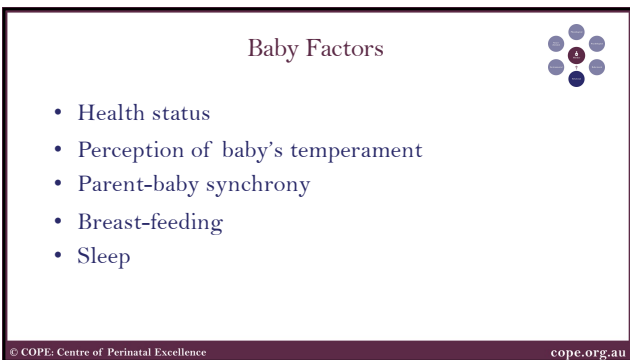
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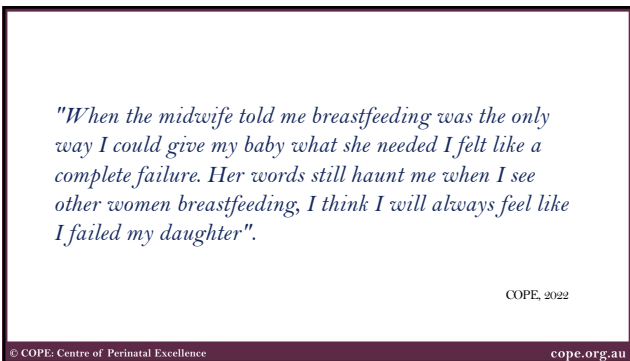
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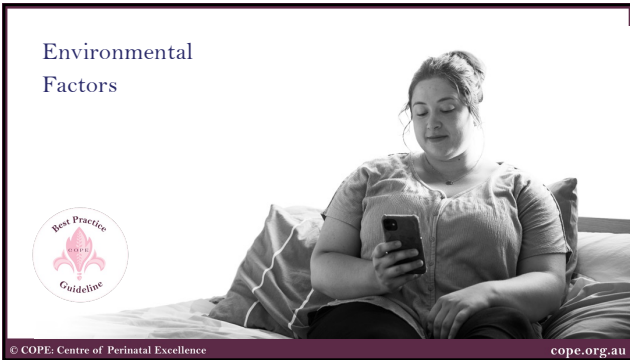
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- ### Isolation / Poor Social Support
- Low levels of social support
    - Emotional
    - Instrumental
    - Informational
    - Appraisal
  - Change in social lifestyle
  - Isolation
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Isolation



- Rural and remote geographic locations
- Times of particular or unexpected isolation (e.g. pandemic)
- Incarcerated parents
- Migrant communities and other marginalised communities –
  - Low education/low socioeconomic
  - LGBTQI+
  - Migrant and Refugee families
  - Adolescent Parents

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Social Adversity

- Poverty
- Difficult living conditions
- Insecure or poor housing
- Socioeconomic status
- Insecure employment
- Incarcerated parents
- Low education

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Impact of Culture



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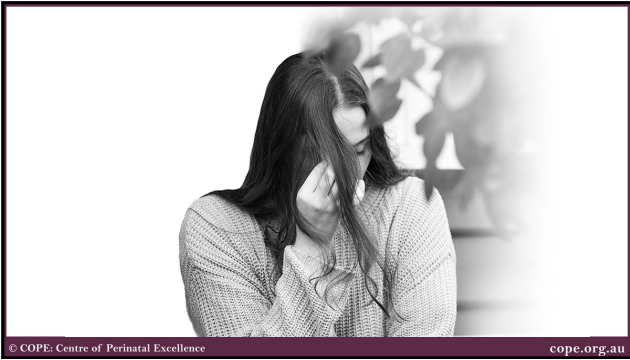
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Multiple Life Events/Stressors 

- Moving or renovating a home
- Financial stress



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Multiple Life Events/Stressors 

- Moving or renovating a home
- Financial stress
- Illness or death in the family

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*"I just couldn't comprehend how I should feel, on one hand this new life we had created was growing and we were so happy, but on the other the thought of meeting our son without (him) present was just so tragic I would panic and feel like there was no way I could cope with that".*

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Multiple Life Events/Stressors 

- Moving or renovating a home
- Financial stress
- Illness or death in the family
- Break-up of a significant relationship

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- Internet
- Information availability
- Changes in science
- Assisted Reproduction
- Social Media



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*"In the early days of new motherhood, it became a reflex to me: During any chance I had to sit down on the couch, I would open up Instagram and begin scrolling. As my own world felt largely restricted to the walls of my home — or the reaches of the park, the grocery store or a playdate, on a good day — I was hungry to see what was happening in the lives of other mums".*

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Technology



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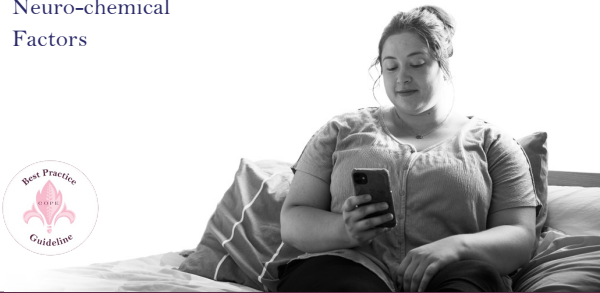
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Neuro-chemical  
Factors



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### Neuro-chemical Factors

- Genetic/family history
- Previous Mental Health Disorders
- Sensitivity to hormonal changes
- Other non-pregnancy related mental health disorders
- Epigenetic
- Breastfeeding changes
- Sleep rhythms
- Iron, copper, mineral changes
- Thyroid gland – eg. onset of Hashimoto

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### Psychiatric History

- Personal history of psychiatric conditions
- Family history of psychiatric conditions  
–Maternal Postnatal Depression and other Perinatal mental health conditions

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### Psychiatric History

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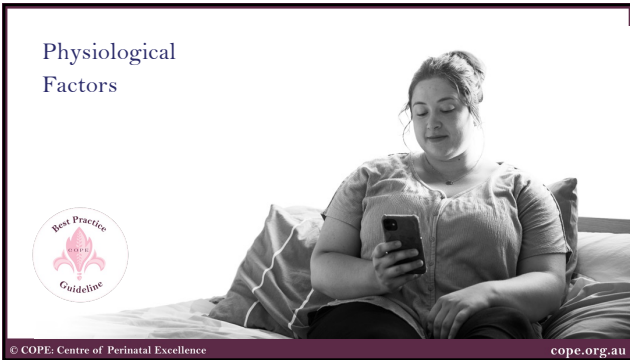
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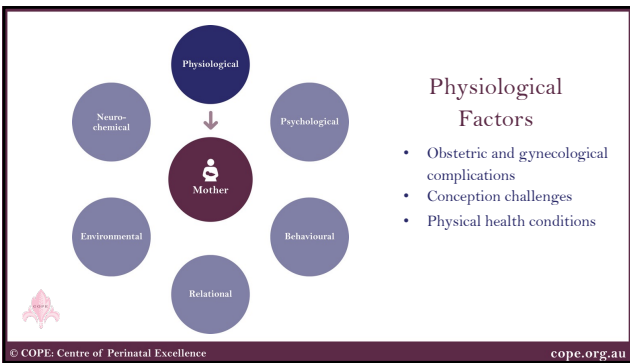
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- Obstetric Gynecological Complications
- Multiples pregnancy
  - Pregnancy or birth complications
  - Birthing mother less than 18 or over 35 years of age
  - Fertility issues
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Obstetric Gynecological Complications 

Physical Birth Trauma

- Perineal tears
- Pelvic floor muscle damage
- Pelvic organ prolapse (POP)
- Pelvic fractures (public bone, coccyx, sacrum)
- Cesarean wounds

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*"the fact that it still stings and feels weird every time I go to the toilet reminds me every day of the horrific day my son was born. I wanted it to be the most magical day of my life, but it was like going to hell and back".*

COPE, 2022

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Physical Conception Challenges 

- Assisted Reproduction Technology (ART)
- In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF)

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Physical Health Conditions

- "High risk" pregnancies
  - Eg. Gestational diabetes
  - Preeclampsia
  - Preterm labour

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Physical Health Conditions

- 'High risk' pregnancies
- Hyperemesis Gravidarum
- Pain
- Thyroid/hormones
- PCOS

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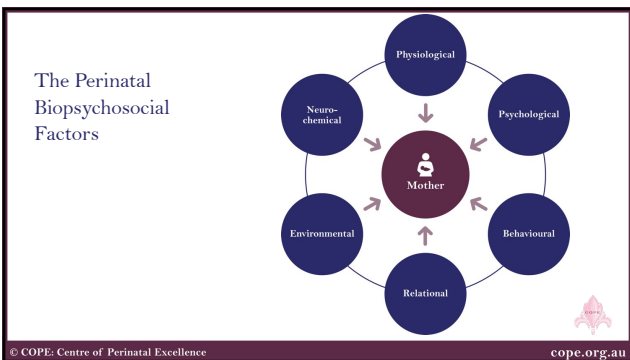
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Applied Skills in Perinatal Mental Health:  
Module 1: Lesson 3

*"It will be evident that there is no one variable that can explain perinatal adjustment and mental health problems and that a coordinated, multidisciplinary approach that gives equal attention to psychological, biological and social and environmental factors is essential in minimizing distress associated with the transition to parenthood"*

Wenzel, 2016

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Module 1: Lesson 3

Perinatal Mental Health  
Biopsychosocial Model



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