

Mindfulness Based Childbirth and Parenting: an RCT on effects on stress, depression, breastfeeding, labor and biomarkers

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Introduction: Transition into parenthood is a demanding life phase and exposes becoming parents to vulnerability for depression and stress – postpartum depression is the most common complication after childbearing in Sweden. This in turn is associated with adverse psychological and physiological outcomes for the infant, of great importance for population health in the long term.

Objectives: To evaluate the effectiveness of a modified 8-week version of Mindfulness Based Childbirth and Parenting during pregnancy in 1) reducing depression symptoms and perceived stress, from pre-to post-intervention and 3, 9 and 12 months after birth among mothers and partners; 2) normalizing levels of inflammatory and stress markers from pre- to post-intervention in the serum of pregnant mothers; and 3) optimizing labor and breastfeeding outcomes.

Methods: Randomized Controlled Trial. In total, 195 participants and their partners have been included in the study. Depression symptoms have been assessed with the Edinburgh Depression Scale and Stress symptoms with the Perceived Stress Scale, at pre- and post-intervention, as well as 3, 9 and 12 months after birth. Serum samples have been collected from, and Heart Rate Variability has been assessed among the first 70 pregnant women at pre- and post-intervention. Labor records and breast feeding data is being collected from all participating mothers.

Results: Final data analyses among all participants have not yet been conducted, but will be completed during 2018. Preliminary results and the study design will be presented.