

## Women's Experience of Pelvic Girdle Pain After Childbirth: A Meta-Synthesis

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### Abstract

#### Introduction

Persistent pelvic girdle pain (PGP) and the resulting consequences may occur for more than 10 years after birth. The purpose of this meta-synthesis is to provide a new interpretation and deeper understanding of women's experience of living with PGP postpartum.

#### Methods

A literature review of CINAHL, PsycINFO, PubMed, Scopus, and ProQuest dissertations was conducted for any qualitative study addressing PGP after birth and published in English from 2000 to 2019. A meta-synthesis using Noblit and Hare's meta-ethnography approach was performed.

#### Results

Seven studies were found describing the experiences of women living with PGP from birth to 13 years after birth. Six themes emerged that represented women's experience: invisible pain, life being restrained, failure to perform the maternal role, experiencing downward emotional spiral, need for active social support, and adaptation to a new conditional life.

#### Discussion

The experiences of women living with PGP after birth highlight the need for holistic care. Interventions by health care providers should support the ability of women to perform daily functions and adapt to their new reality instead of a disease-focused intervention.

In addition, women with PGP emphasize the importance of active social support from family members and health care providers. Future research that examines the differences between PGP during the first 3 months postpartum versus that which persists later is needed to develop targeted interventions.

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