

ADULTHOOD

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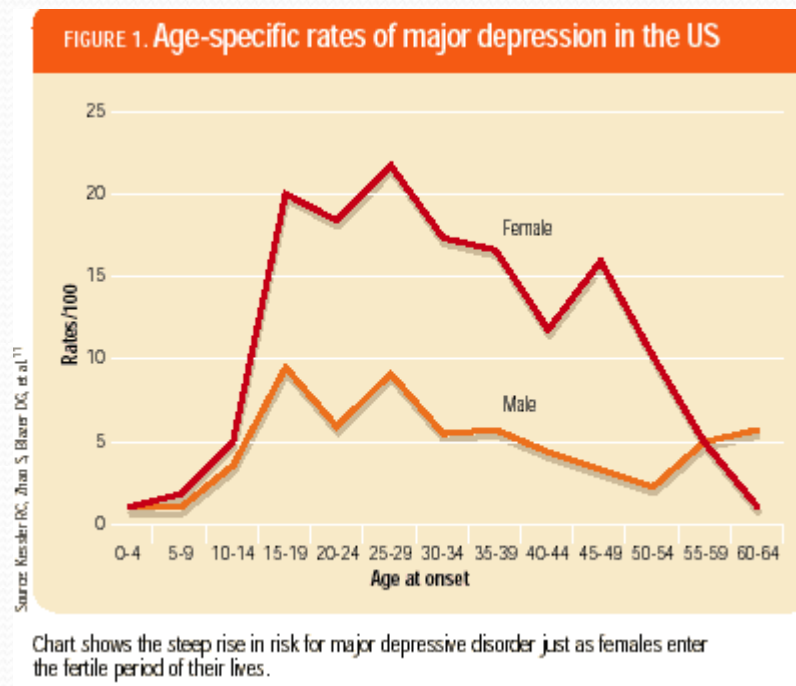
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Differences Between Men and Women in Depression

- Depression Prevalence
 - Women: 15-25%
 - Men: 4-12%
- Suicide Rate: 90% of suicides are men
- Treatment Response
 - Women (premenopause) more likely to respond to SSRI's; Men to Tricyclics
- Hormonal Treatments:
 - Some evidence for hormonal treatments in women- little study in men

Depression is Twice as Common in Women during the Reproductive Years





Why is Depression More Common in Women?

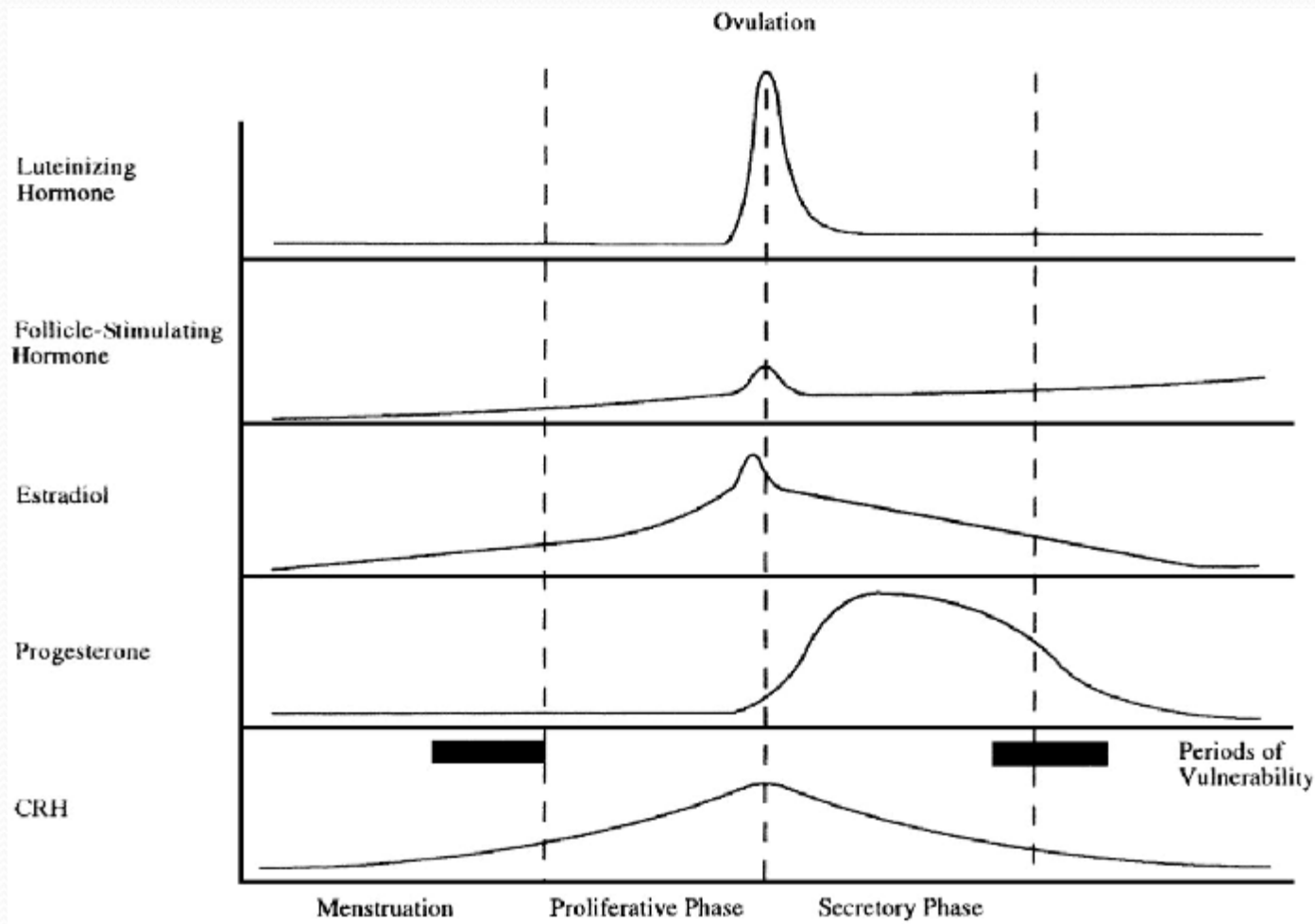
- Lots of theories!
 - Women more likely to report/seek help
 - Women more likely to have suffered abuse
 - Exposure to hormonal fluctuations
 - Women are exposed to more stress

Hormonal Fluctuations May Trigger Depression in Some Women



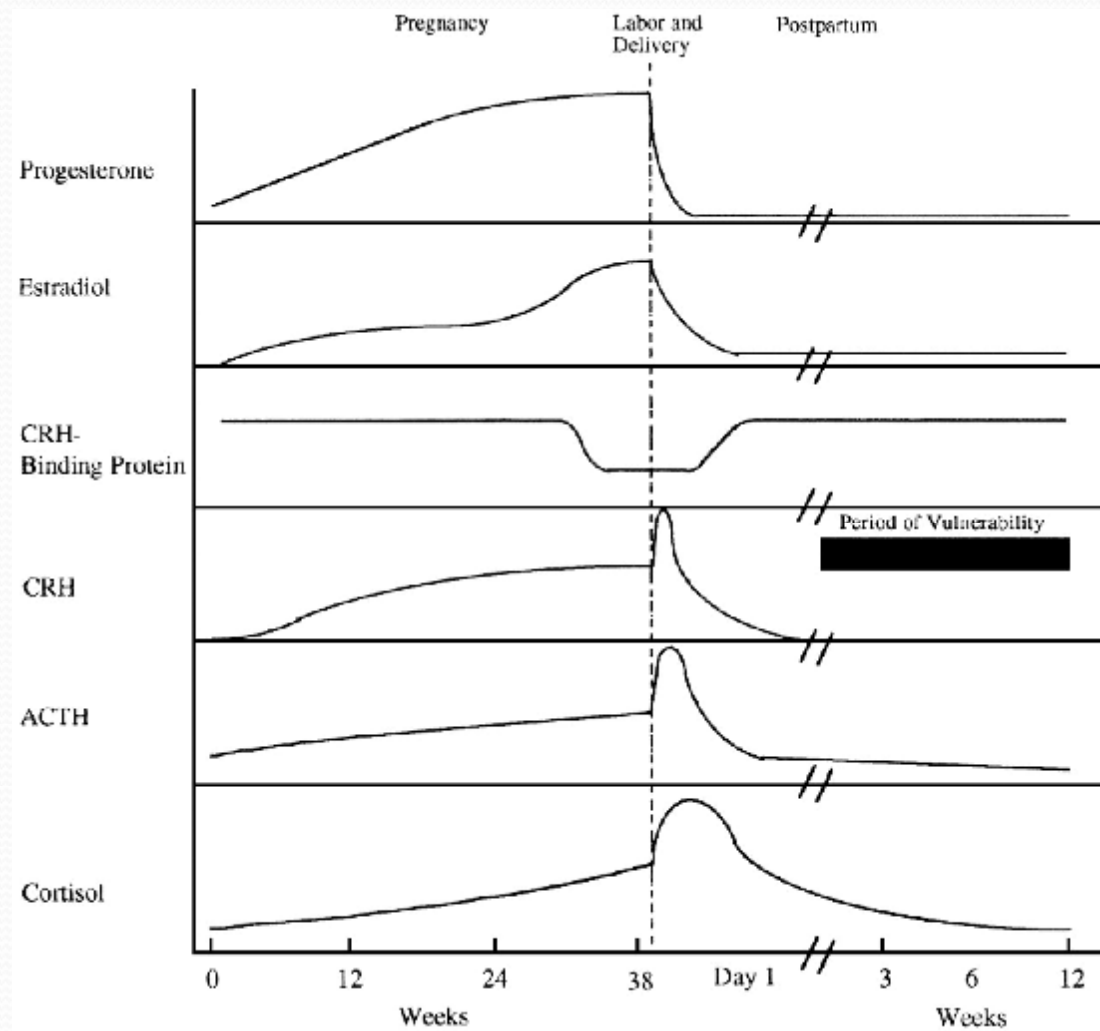
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Hormonal changes and period of increased vulnerability to mood disorders and autoimmune phenomena during the menstrual cycle



Chrousos, G. P. et. al. Ann Intern Med 1998;129:229-240

Hormonal changes and period of increased vulnerability to mood disorders and autoimmune phenomena during pregnancy and the postpartum period



Chrousos, G. P. et. al. Ann Intern Med 1998;129:229-240

Perimenopausal Depression



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Hormone Levels During Perimenopause

- Estrogen and progesterone both gradually decline and may fluctuate
- FSH and LH levels gradually increase and continue to cycle
- Postmenopause: estrogen and progesterone levels remain at steady, low levels
 - At least one study found that depressive symptoms worsened when hormone levels fluctuate during perimenopause



Definitions

- Menopause- amenorrhea for 12 consecutive months=ONE day
- Perimenopause- the transition to menopause, usually lasts 5-7 years during which time menstruation becomes irregular



Clinical Symptoms Associated with Perimenopause

- Irregular Menses
- Hot Flashes
- Sweats
- Sleep Disturbance with Awakenings
- Depressive *Symptoms* and Irritability

- When is it Major Depression? Look for lack of enjoyment...



Perimenopause and Major Depression

- Several recent studies have found an increased risk of depression (including new onset) during perimenopause
- In women with a preexisting mood disorder, the perimenopausal time may increase the risk of a major depressive episode



Perimenopausal Depression: Medication Treatment

- Preferential response to Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs)
- Estrogen has also been demonstrated to be a rapid and useful treatment both alone and in addition to antidepressants in perimenopausal depression
- It is less clear that Hormone Replacement Therapy (estrogen PLUS progesterone) is helpful in depression
 - HRT also associated with increased risk of thrombosis, breast cancer, stroke, and heart disease (Women's Health Initiative Trial)

Life Style Approaches



- Exercise!
- Limit or Eliminate
 - Alcohol
 - Caffeine
 - Nicotine
 - Simple carbs (donuts!)
- Calcium (600mg BID)
- Good sleep hygiene



Perimenopausal Depression: Conclusions

- **First line treatment: SSRI's**
- **Short-term use of estrogen to achieve a rapid response in perimenopausal women with Major Depression may be indicated**
- **Long-term therapy with estrogen alone has many potential medical problems**
- **HRT is currently unproven**
- **Everyone should adopt healthy habits!**