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Australia advocates cognitive behavioural therapy for perinatal care

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60 per cent of women experience sleep disturbance during the latter parts of pregnancy



New research from Monash University has found that a non-drug sleep program, using Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), can significantly reduce sleep problems in women in the final trimester of their pregnancy and up to 2 years after the birth of their baby.

Importantly, the study found that in women who suffer from insomnia symptoms during pregnancy, the benefits of CBT in enhancing the quality of their sleep lasted throughout the first two years post-birth.

The study, led by Australia-based Monash University's Turner Institute for Brain and Mental Health, and published in the journal, Psychological Medicine, suggests that CBT for better sleep should become a part of routine perinatal care.

According to the study, 60 per cent of women experience sleep disturbance during the latter parts of pregnancy due to physiological changes such as fetal growth, hormonal changes and restless leg syndrome – and for many women with insomnia during pregnancy, sleep issues could persist beyond two years after the birth.

The researchers were recently awarded a Clinical Trials and Cohort Studies grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council to conduct a larger trial to evaluate the effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, and implementation potential of a scalable CBT sleep program with the potential to achieve sustainable integration in routine perinatal care.