

Texas Health Steps Medical Checkups

Preventive Care for Infants Postpartum Depression Screening

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) notes that the incidence of perinatal depression ranges from 5 to 25 percent of pregnant and postpartum women, and studies of low-income and teenage mothers report depressive symptoms at rates of 40 to 60 percent. The AAP recommends that infant primary care providers integrate postpartum depression screening into the well-child visits at one, two, four, and six months of age. In alignment with the AAP, Texas Health Steps recommends postpartum depression screening at least once for all infants during a Texas Health Steps checkup.

Effective July 1, 2018, postpartum depression (PPD) screening is a benefit for infants during a Texas Health Steps medical checkup. PPD screening is a recommended (optional) screening. Texas Health Steps recommends all providers complete PPD screening for all infants, at least once between birth and the infant's first birthday.

When to Screen

The Texas Health Steps Periodicity Schedule indicates the appropriate checkup ages when PPD screening may be completed. Screening may be completed at any checkup birth through the infant's first birthday. Screening is recommended to be completed at least once for each infant.

Who to screen

Postpartum mothers should be screened during the infant's checkup. This screening is a benefit for the infant and is not dependent on the mother's eligibility or coverage. Only the infant's mother may be screened.

Screening Tools

Screening requires the use of a validated postpartum depression screening tool. Providers may choose the validated tool of their choice. Some screening tools are available for use free of charge. Others must be purchased, and some require permission for use.

Validated screening tools include but are not limited to:

- Edinburgh Postpartum Depression Screen (EPDS)
- Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9)
- Postpartum Depression Screening Scale (PPDS)

Links to validated screening tools are posted on the Texas Health Steps Form webpage at:

[Texas Health Steps Forms page.](#)

Screening Results

Screenings should be scored according to the instructions and standards provided for each specific screening tool. After scoring, determine if the screening is negative or positive for PPD. Discuss results with the mother including the possibility of depression and the impact depression may have on the mother, family and health of the infant.

Positive Screenings

All positive screenings require a referral to a provider who can perform further evaluation and determine an appropriate course of treatment.

Referral providers include but are not limited to:

- Mental health clinicians
- The mother's primary care provider
- Obstetricians and gynecologists
- Family physicians
- Community resources such as Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs) and Local Behavioral Health Authorities (LBHAs)

A referral should be made regardless of the funding source or eligibility status of the mother. LMHAs and LBHAs are prepared to receive referrals from Texas Health Steps providers. Mothers referred to LMHAs and LBHAs will not be placed on a waiting list when referred for a positive PPD screen. The LMHA/LBHA will conduct an assessment, and if the assessment findings indicate a mother is not eligible for mental health services, the LMHA/LBHA may deviate into another level of care, place the mother on the LMHA/LBHA waiting list, or refer her to other providers in the community.

A return visit for the infant before the next scheduled checkup may be appropriate in some cases.

Emergency Referrals

Refer any mother who is at risk for imminent harm or danger to herself or her infant to an emergency center for an emergent evaluation

Billing and Coding

The infant's provider may bill one screening per infant between birth and the infant's first birthday. If the infant's provider changes the new provider may also bill one screening.

- Only one CPT code (G8431 or G8510) may be submitted.
- Use CPT code G8431 for positive screens.
- Use CPT code G8510 for negative screens.
- Do not include maternal diagnosis codes on the infant's Texas Health Steps checkup claim form.

Reimbursement

Reimbursement is available in addition to reimbursement for the checkup. Fee-for-service reimbursement is \$10.49. Reimbursement is available only once per infant per provider and covers any and all screenings completed during checkups.

Documentation

Document maternal postpartum depression screening in the infant's medical record. You must include:

- Screening tool used
- Screening results
- If screen was positive or negative
- Referrals made
- Health education and anticipatory guidance
- When to return for next visit or checkup

Establishing Office Protocol for PPD Screening

Plan ahead and establish an office protocol for PPD screening. Utilize medical support staff who have been trained on PPD screening.

- Determine when to conduct PPD screenings
- Select a validated tool(s)
- Provide each postpartum mother a printed or electronic screening tool to complete while waiting for infant's provider
- Score screening tool using standards provided for each tool
- Determine whether screen is positive or negative
- Review screening results with mother
- Provide appropriate referral for positive screens
- Refer any mother who appears to be a risk to herself or her infant for emergent evaluation

More Information

Additional information on PPD screening is available here:

- [Texas Health Steps](#)
- [Texas Medicaid Provider Procedures Manual](#)
- [Texas Health Steps Online Provider Education](#)
- [The Texas Clinician's Postpartum Depression Toolkit](#)