A Dyad before before Birth:
Pregnant Women’s Mental Health Affects the Next Generation

Women’s experiences during pregnancy — including stress, depression, anxiety — affect the baby before birth. This presentation will review some of the research in this area, including some showing differences in fetal behavior, newborn brain development, and placental gene regulation, related to women’s psychosocial functioning in pregnancy. There is a possible third pathway for the familial inheritance of risk for mental health problems: the impact of pregnant women’s toxic stress on fetal and infant brain-behavior development.

Learning Objectives
1. Identify at least 2 sources of data indicating that women’s experiences during pregnancy affect the fetus and his/her development
2. Provide data challenging the fallacy that the maternal infant relationship starts once the baby is born
3. State the disparity in rates of postpartum depression between women with low socio economic standing versus others

Disclosure Statements: Dr. Catherine Monk has nothing to disclose. The course director, Michael Schrift, DO and the planning committee members of this activity have nothing to disclose, Joan Anzia, MD, Leo Barriga, MSW, LCSW, Michael Brook, PhD, Chang Chen, MA, Stephen Dinwiddie, MD, Mina Dulcan, MD, John Franklin, MD, MSc, MA, Jacqueline K. Gollan, PhD, Gabriel Heiber, MD, Philip O’Donnell, PhD, John S. Rolland, MD, MPH, Lisa J. Rosen-thal, MD, FAPM, Elizabeth Sita, MD, Adrienne Taylor, MD, Lei Wang, PhD, Jill A. Weissberg-Benchell, PhD

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