Characteristics of women with perinatal depression in a large cohort of women with depression
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Background and Method
Perinatal depression (PND) is commonly classified as a subtype of major depressive disorder (MDD). The Australian Genetics of Depression Study (AGDS) is a large ongoing study of the etiology of depression that recruited 20,689 participants (aged between 28 and 58 years; 75% female) during 2016-2018. Participants completed an online survey.

Women with PND were divided into 2 groups:
1. Those who had already had at least one episode of depression (called ‘priorMDD’)
2. Those who had never experienced any depression before their first episode of PND (called ‘PNDfirst’)
Both these groups were compared to women who have MDD, but who have not experienced any episodes of PND despite having at least one live birth.

Results
Traits listed in the chart were all significantly associated with PND for women who have experienced MDD before their first pregnancy. These women seem to have a more severe form of depression than women who experience PND as their first episode of depression. These results support repeated screening for PND during pregnancy and after delivery, particularly for women with a history of depression.

Odds ratio (OR), with 95% confidence interval, that women with PND will experience the listed traits compared to women with MDD only. The vertical dashed line represents the point where the likelihood of having the characteristic is the same for PND cases and women with MDD only. Significant results lie totally to the right of the line.

CLIN-0233