



**Presenter:** Stephanie Carver

**Session & Time:** Poster\_II / 1:00 to 1:50pm

**Room:** Guzman Lecture Hall

**Discipline:** Nursing

**Faculty Mentor:** Deborah Meshel

**Digital Portfolio URL:**

**Title:** Psychological Impact of Ulcerative Colitis on Pregnancy and Postpartum

**Abstract:**

### **Abstract**

#### **Background**

Ulcerative colitis (UC) poses significant challenges during pregnancy, affecting both physical and mental health. While the physiological effects of UC during pregnancy are well documented, less is known about its impact on maternal mental health. This study aims to investigate the psychological impact of UC on pregnant women, focusing on stress levels, postpartum

depression (PPD) incidence, and the role of multidisciplinary care in improving mental health outcomes.

### **Objective**

The primary objective of this research proposal is to evaluate the psychological impact of UC during pregnancy and determine whether disease activity increases the risk of PPD and stress. A secondary objective is to assess whether multidisciplinary care with mental health support improves psychological outcomes compared to standard care.

### **Methods**

This quantitative, longitudinal cohort study will recruit pregnant women aged 18–45 with a UC diagnosis. Participants will be assessed at three time points: during the first and third trimesters, 6 weeks postpartum, and 6 months postpartum. A comparison group of pregnant women without UC will also be included. Data collection will involve validated surveys (EPDS, PSS, HADS), medical record reviews, and follow-up assessments. Statistical analysis will include independent t-tests to evaluate psychological outcomes based on the type of care model received.

### **Expected Results**

It is anticipated that pregnant women with UC will experience higher levels of stress and postpartum depression than those without UC. Those with active UC flare-ups during pregnancy are expected to have worse mental health outcomes. Women receiving multidisciplinary care, including prenatal care, gastroenterology care, and mental health support, may exhibit lower stress and PPD rates compared to those receiving standard prenatal care.

### **Conclusion**

This research proposal aims to demonstrate the significant psychological burden of UC during pregnancy and postpartum, supporting the need for integrated, multidisciplinary care that combines gastroenterology with maternal mental health support.