

# INPLASY PROTOCOL

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**Corresponding author:**  
Stephanie Catsaros

stephanie.labalette@chu-lille.fr

**Author Affiliation:**  
Laboratory of  
Psychopathology and Health  
Processes, Université Paris  
Cité.

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None declared.

## Psychological impact of hypnosis for pregnancy and childbirth: A systematic review

Catsaros, S<sup>1</sup>; Wendland, J<sup>2</sup>.

**Review question / Objective:** The objective of this review is to investigate all articles of experimental studies with hypnosis-based interventions during pregnancy and/or childbirth, with a specific focus on their effect on women's mental health in the perinatal period.

**Eligibility criteria:** The articles included in this review refer to experimental studies, with a quantitative and/or qualitative design that apply a hypnosis intervention in adult women during pregnancy and/or labor. The studies must have clear experimental between or within subject designs with a precise description of the hypnosis interventions. The study designs must include the measure of a least one psychological variable (such as the presence of symptoms of depression or anxiety, stress, fear of childbirth, pain as an emotional experience, or the emotional experience of pregnancy and/or childbirth). All included articles have to be published in English between January 2000 and December 2021. This review excludes hypnosis interventions in the context of miscarriages, pregnancy terminations or for helping women conceive. Articles are also excluded when the study measures pain only as a quantitative outcome with no reference to the psychological aspect (such as memory of pain or satisfaction with pain relief). Furthermore, articles that do not meet sufficient qualitative methodological criteria (as measured by the Critical Appraisal Skills Program (CASP) Checklist) are also excluded.

**INPLASY registration number:** This protocol was registered with the International Platform of Registered Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis Protocols (INPLASY) on 18 November 2022 and was last updated on 23 November 2022 (registration number INPLASY2022110089).

### INTRODUCTION

**Review question / Objective:** The objective of this review is to investigate all articles of experimental studies with hypnosis-based interventions during pregnancy and/or

childbirth, with a specific focus on their effect on women's mental health in the perinatal period.

**Rationale:** Hypnosis has been used for many decades in various medical fields,

including pregnancy. This period is particularly challenging for women's mental health. Yet, there is little literature concerning the psychological impact of hypnosis in the perinatal period.

The goal of this review is to explore the impact of perinatal, hypnosis-based interventions on women's mental health and to examine their designs, results and intervention contents.

**Rationale:** Hypnosis has been used for many decades in various medical fields, including pregnancy. This period is particularly challenging for women's mental health. Yet, there is little literature concerning the psychological impact of hypnosis in the perinatal period. Furthermore there is a lack of consensus concerning the design of studies including hypnosis-based interventions: this methodological limitation makes evaluation of efficacy or replicability difficult to achieve.

This review focuses on exploring the impact of perinatal, hypnosis-based interventions on women's mental health for one part, and on examining the designs and results of the studies and performing a thematic analysis of the contents of the interventions.

**Condition being studied:** Pregnancy in adult women.

## METHODS

**Search strategy:** Search string : (hypnosis OR hypnotherapy OR "self-hypnosis") AND (pregnancy OR childbirth OR perinatal) Databases : PubMed, PsycInfo, ScienceDirect

Articles in English, published from January 2000 till December 2021. A literature search was also performed for further articles on Google Scholar.

**Participant or population:** Adult pregnant women.

**Intervention:** Hypnosis based interventions during pregnancy and childbirth.

**Comparator:** Not applicable.

**Study designs to be included:** Studies with experimental between or within subject designs, both qualitative and/or quantitative, evaluating the impact of a hypnosis-based intervention, led during pregnancy and/or childbirth, on a least one psychological variable.

**Eligibility criteria:** The articles included in this review refer to experimental studies, with a quantitative and/or qualitative design that apply a hypnosis intervention in adult women during pregnancy and/or labor. The studies must have clear experimental between or within subject designs with a precise description of the hypnosis interventions. The study designs must include the measure of a least one psychological variable (such as the presence of symptoms of depression or anxiety, stress, fear of childbirth, pain as an emotional experience, or the emotional experience of pregnancy and/or childbirth). All included articles have to be published in English between January 2000 and December 2021. This review excludes hypnosis interventions in the context of miscarriages, pregnancy terminations or for helping women conceive. Articles are also excluded when the study measures pain only as a quantitative outcome with no reference to the psychological aspect (such as memory of pain or satisfaction with pain relief). Furthermore, articles that do not meet sufficient qualitative methodological criteria (as measured by the Critical Appraisal Skills Program (CASP) Checklist) are also excluded.

**Information sources:** PubMed, PsycInfo, ScienceDirect. A literature search was also performed on Google Scholar. Authors were contacted in one case for further information about the design of their study.

**Main outcome(s):** Hypnosis contributes to a better subjective experience of pregnancy and childbirth and enhances women's overall wellbeing in the perinatal period.

**Quality assessment / Risk of bias analysis:** The Critical Appraisal Skills Program (CASP) Checklists was used to systematically assess the design of the

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experimental studies. The minimum score for inclusion in this review was 7/11.

**Strategy of data synthesis:** The selection process was conducted according to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-analyses (the PRISMA statement). The gathered articles were subsequently evaluated for methodological quality with the CASP assessment checklist. The final included articles were then qualitatively analyzed in different aspects of their protocols (such as aim, population, number and time of sessions, assessment period etc.) and outcomes (psychological and other variables). The experimental interventions of every study were further thematically analyzed, then common themes were gathered and a final thematic map was drawn.

**Subgroup analysis:** Not performed.

**Sensitivity analysis:** Not performed.

**Language restriction:** English.

**Country(ies) involved:** France.

**Keywords:** hypnosis; pregnancy; childbirth; psychological impact; systematic review; qualitative analysis.

**Contributions of each author:**

Author 1 - Stephanie CATSAROS.

Email: stephanie.labalette@chu-lille.fr

Author 2 - Jaqueline WENDLAND.

Email: jaqueline.wendland@parisdescartes.fr

Both authors equally participated in the design of this review and on appraising the review process. S.C. performed the screening of the articles and both S.C. and J.W. approved the final inclusions. S.C. conducted the analysis of the included studies for designs and themes and both authors approved the final themes selected.