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Postpartum Diseases

# Introduction

Charlotte Perkin Gilman's, "The Yellow Wallpaper" is an account of a woman named Jane who narrates her account of a summer holiday at an old mansion post her baby's, as she is prescribed as ‘neurasthenia' by her husband John and recommended rest-cure treatment. She is confined to a nursery room. Jane shows her hatred towards the hideous yellow wallpaper in two places, that irtritates her. Although she wants to change the room her husband does not allow it. Over time this irritability worsens and she discovers that there is a pattern in the wallpaper forming bulbous eyes and broken necks, and a vague figure imprisoned behind bars. This increases her depression and fatigue as days go by. She becomes more and more anxious and suffers from sleep deprivation. With all this time staying alone jane develops an unhealthy obsession with the Yellow wallpaper falling into psychosis. Although the obsession was not the prime reason for Jane to fall hysterical. The comprehensive display of her symptoms of isolation by her husband, fatigue, irritability, mood deterioration and feelings of sadness can be closely linked to from Postpartum disease.

The postpartum disease is an emotional disorder reflected through mood fluctuations, it is generally associated with childbirth. The postpartum disease does not stem from a single cause. Although the precision of the root cause of the disease is still not found, it is a product of both physical and psychological factors. The symptoms of the postpartum disease may include anxiety, fatigue, tiredness and extreme sadness followed by episodes of crying. Therefore consequently affecting the health of a person by causing eating disorders and sleep irregularity (Health). Such symptoms regularly affect the functional ability of women to function effectively and to care for themselves. The disease is a commonly observed in women than in men. The postpartum disorder in women is usually associated with baby blues or a generation of emotional instability due to the isolation of mothers post birth.

**Thesis Statement**

# The narrator in “The Yellow Wallpaper” suffers both postpartum depression and postpartum psychosis, which modern medicine has recently proved legitimate diseases. The narrator’s diseases are made worse because her husband does not let the narrator out of this confined room that he has her in. Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s project in “The Yellow Wallpaper” is to make readers aware that women can suffer from such diseases.

# Discussion

Women in The 18th and 19th century were not given primary importance, leave alone attention to the diseases which targeted the female gender only. If in the case were examined were forced to accept the diagnosis. The nervous diseases in women were based on generalized symptoms and in empathetic ways of treatment. During the 19th century, the postpartum disease was not recognized, women fell at risk to the postpartum depression due to depression in the previous or current pregnancy, psychological issues, a life filled with stress, violence, isolation and a lack of emotional support from her husband or partner. It can primarily understand through hormonal and change in genetics. Postpartum psychosis is not a diagnosis but is used to refer to a psychiatric situation where the patient starts to hallucinate, become paranoid and become delusional (I, PS and P). Jane had suffered a deterioration in her physical and psychological health due to all these factors. Jane’s anxiety to be with her baby and the rest cure treatment despite her unwillingness and forced confinement led her to lose her ability to logically think. The postpartum connotations in the Yellow Paper are proportionally linked to patriarchal structure and limiting women's choice to practice free will. Jane had experience ridicule at the hands of her husband and had accepted it as part of her marriage. John did not value Janes opinion even in the matter of her personal concern. The weeks in isolation put Jane in a position where she eventually started to lose her rationally and hallucinate and seek refuge in her imagination (Phebe Tucker).

### Sequelae

The effects of Post Partum disorder and psychosis can be evidently seen the behavior, emotional and baby- mothers relationship patterns. However, the central theme which affects and leads to all these causes is the effect on cognition. It diminishes the power to make decisions and process thoughts, the lack of concentration on particular subjects and memory all affect the regular and functioning of an individual (Depression Among Women l Depression | Reproductive Health | CDC). Some of the other effects on the postpartum disease are the constant state of sadness, mood swings, exhaustion, low-self esteem and anxiousness harm the emotional ability of a person (The Boston Women's Health Book Collective: Our Bodies Ourselves). The individuals feel left out and lack of interest in day to day chores. The emotional inability can relate to the day to day operational inability and social withdrawal from society. The feeling of anxiety contains and hinder the mother-child bonding, where the mother feels that she is unable to provide love to the child.

Recommendations

The inability and insufficiency to identify the postpartum disorder can lead to a further depreciation in the health status of women, which could take from months to years to recover, causing her to fall prey to sleeping and eating disorders as the symptoms grow deeper. Therefore the symptoms shall be recognized by husbands, family and those near and dear to the patients in early stages so that the accurate and comprehensive set of prevention and treatment can be sought.

The treatments to postpartum disease can be sought through counseling, social inclusion, and medical initiatives. The psychological interventions to treat postpartum disease refers to therapy sessions especially by application of cognitive-behavioral and interpersonal therapy models. The cognitive behavior therapy leads to excluding negative thought patterns which lead to anxiety and depression. The empathetic and interpersonal approach also adds to the recovery process of the patient; by hearing their thoughts, opinions and adhering to techniques which make the patient feel better and relaxed. The social and cultural inclusion of women who suffer from the postpartum disorder and the understanding that women can suffer such diseases after giving birth to a child can also reduce the risk of postpartum disorder amongst women. The recognition of women and their emotional needs can also contain the risk involved. The postpartum disease can also be addressed and treated by the medical treatments, such like the use of antidepressants and hormone therapy in women which can reduce the depressive symptoms in women (Fitelson, Kim, and Baker). In a recent approval by the FDA, medications have been introduced to reduce postpartum depression.

# Conclusion

Gilman's account of the postpartum disease has registered the patriarchy, social and cultural norms, and the women's marginalization to an extent which drops psychological traumas on them. The post-traumatic stress and psychosis engage individuals in losing the psychological and physical operationability. The Story narrates suggested that Jane is trapped in her imagination at the cost of her rationality. The overall health status of Jane in the Yellow Wallpaper hence can be concluded in being under the postpartum disease which could have been averted and reduced if John had extended emotional support and had not confined her to isolation and understood. Such experiences and diseases in today's world also represent the mismanagement of emotional support and mistreatment of women and the adverse effects they have on them. The postpartum disease is a curable and preventable disease provide it is timely recognized and treated.

# Works Cited

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