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VITAL SIGNS

Having a Baby: Anxious Dreams Common in Early Motherhood

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New mothers and women who are about to have babies often do not get a lot of sleep. And when they do, a new study suggests, their dreams may make them sorry that they did.

Writing in the current issue of *Sleep*, [researchers say](#) they have found that pregnant women and those who have recently given birth commonly have dreams in which their baby is in danger. The dreams can be so vivid that the women call out in their sleep and move around the bed.

The researchers, Tore Nielsen and Tyna Paquette of Sacred Heart Hospital in Montreal, said pregnancy and birth were known to influence dreams. In a high number of cases, the dreams are of infants in peril, provoking “anxiety in the mother that often spills over into wakefulness.”

The researchers posed questions to 273 women who were pregnant, had just given birth or were in a control group. One dream in particular recurred among different women, and involved a fear that the baby was lost somewhere in the bed.

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