The challenge of intimacy: fathers experiences

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Abstract
From an exploratory study that looked at the functional status of fathers following birth, the authors have gained insight into the effect of pregnancy, birth and the postnatal period on the sexual relationships of couples. A qualitative approach was undertaken of fathers written comments in a survey conducted at 6, 12 and 24 weeks postpartum. A total of 204 fathers were enrolled in the study with a response rate of 63% for the first survey. A content analysis of the first survey was conducted on the comments made about sexuality in pregnancy and the early postpartum period. From result of the findings from the content analysis as well as a literature review on sexuality after childbirth, the authors would recommend that couples receive education on sexual intimacy throughout the pregnancy and the first few weeks in the postnatal period. For this to occur health professional may need to be educated in appropriate ways of disseminating this information.

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