Book Review

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Seven Sisters for Seven Days: The Mothers' Manual for Community-Based Postpartum Care
Michelle Peterson © 2016 Praeclarus Press, 130 pages, paperback, \$16.95

Available from: <http://stores.praeclaruspress.com/seven-sisters-for-seven-days-the-mothers-manual-for-community-based-postpartum-care/>

Seven Sisters for Seven Days is a guide for mothers organizing a postpartum support system before the birth of their infants. Michelle Peterson is a mother who had a challenging postpartum experience after her first child was born. During her second pregnancy, she worked hard to set up a support system, which laid the foundation for her postpartum protocol and the writing of this book.

In our culture, there is a significant lack of knowledge regarding the postpartum period. Women today spend time preparing for pregnancy and birth but think little about how needs will be met after the baby has arrived or what these needs may be. *Seven Sisters for Seven Days* takes an in-depth look at the physical and emotional needs of the postpartum mother and explores the barriers to asking for and receiving help.

The book outlines the Seven Sisters program, designed to make receiving and providing assistance as easy as possible. Women are aided in identifying individual needs and becoming confident in asking for and receiving support. Specific ideas for organizing this support are presented.

Although I wholeheartedly agree with the main premise and purpose of the book, I question how many mothers can relate to Ms. Peterson's own experiences, along with those of other mothers included in the book. The book

assumes that most families would have access to such resources as home birth, naturopathic physicians, herbal teas, belly wraps, placenta molds, and Ayurvedic meals; yet, these may appeal only to a specific group.

I found the chapter of the book on feeding one's baby to lack helpful breastfeeding information, although the benefits of breastfeeding are cited and the book mentions the importance of finding support and educating yourself. Ms. Peterson relates some of her personal breastfeeding experiences, including badly damaged nipples and excruciating pain. A chart describes some breastfeeding challenges. However, the solutions focus only on bottle-feeding breast milk and obtaining donor milk through milk banks or community milk sharing.

Seven Sisters concludes with a list of resources, along with worksheets, charts, and a meditation exercise. A sample letter inviting friends and family to participate in the "Seven Sisters Model of Community Care" is especially helpful.

I recommend this book for pregnant mothers, and particularly to those who have struggled in the past and are looking for a more positive postpartum experience. I found myself inspired, wanting to see this model of care implemented in my own area. Perhaps, the Seven Sisters program could lead to a greater understanding of the need for "compassionate, community postpartum care."

Leah Segura, BSW, IBCLC, RLC, PCD(DONA), developed a passion to work with new parents even before having her own three children. She has been volunteering with La Leche League International since 2006. In 2010, Leah started a private practice working with parents as a postpartum doula. She was certified in 2013 with DONA International and also became an International Board Certified Lactation Consultant. She continues to work in private practice and volunteer through several organizations to advocate for parents in her community. Her website is NurturingTraditions.net.

Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country Program Overview

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion has released *Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country at a Glance*. The resource provides a comprehensive overview of the Prevention Fund-supported Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country (GHWIC) program. GHWIC supports a coordinated, holistic approach to healthy living and chronic disease prevention and reinforces the work already underway in Indian Country to make healthy choices and lifeways easier for American Indians and Alaska Natives. GHWIC interventions focus on reducing tobacco use and exposure, improving nutrition and physical activity, increasing support for breastfeeding, increasing health literacy, and strengthening team-based health care and community-clinical links. <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/aag/indian-country.htm>

Source: USBC

Updated ABM Clinical Protocol on Substance Use

The Academy of Breastfeeding Medicine (ABM) has released an updated *Clinical Protocol #21: Guidelines for Breastfeeding and Substance Use or Substance Use Disorder, Revised 2015*. A central goal of ABM is the development of clinical protocols for managing common medical problems that may impact breastfeeding success. These protocols serve only as guidelines for the care of breastfeeding mothers and infants and do not delineate an exclusive course of treatment or serve as standards of medical care. <http://www.bfmed.org/Media/Files/Protocols/Guidelines%20for%20Breastfeeding%20and%20Substance%20Use%20or%20Use%20Disorder.pdf>

Source: USBC