

# Girlfriends Health, PLC

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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Girlfriends Health PLC Awarded Grant from March of Dimes**

*Free support group to help Brevard County pregnant women cope with depression*

Indialantic, Florida – (July 7, 2008) – Girlfriends Health PLC, a Brevard County organization dedicated to promoting women’s health during every stage of life with a special interest in the childbearing years, is pleased to announce they have been awarded a grant from March of Dimes to increase awareness of depression during pregnancy and provide support for women.

Contrary to popular belief, pregnancy does not shield women from experiencing depression and/or anxiety. In fact, depression during pregnancy affects 10% to 20% of women. Since pregnancy is traditionally portrayed as a time of blissfulness for the mother-to-be, it can be very difficult for women to admit to experiencing and reporting such feelings. Furthermore, given uncertainty about the use of certain antidepressants on the fetus during pregnancy, many women chose not to take any medications. Recent research has shown that *untreated* depression during pregnancy can lead to serious perinatal risks and even premature birth and low birth weight.

“The good news is that psychotherapy has been found to be as effective as antidepressants in mild to moderate cases” said Dr. Rachel Lefebvre, Girlfriends Health’s licensed psychologist. “This is why it is important to inform the public and make sure services are in place to help pregnant women deal with depression and/or anxiety.” Girlfriends Health has also developed an online tool to help women learn about depression during pregnancy, identify risks factors, take a depression screen, and tips for coping. This information can be found at: [www.GirlfriendsHealth.com](http://www.GirlfriendsHealth.com).

The free weekly support group will start Monday July 14<sup>th</sup>. The group will help women learn coping strategies, get support from other women and prepare them for motherhood. Meetings will be held Mondays from 7:30 to 9:00 pm at the Women’s Center 1425 Aurora Rd. Melbourne, FL 32935. Pre-Registration is required. Contact Dr. Lefebvre at: 321-536-1724 or visit [www.GirlfriendsHealth.com](http://www.GirlfriendsHealth.com) for more information.

### About Girlfriends Health PLC:

Girlfriends Health PLC is a Brevard County organization dedicated to promoting women’s health during every stage of life with a special interest in the childbearing years. As becoming pregnant, being pregnant and giving birth can deeply effect one woman’s physical, mental and spiritual well being, Girlfriends Health’s goal is to help women feel empowered and confident during this special time. Dr. Lefebvre is a licensed psychologist specializing in mind/body medicine and perinatal issues including infertility, pregnancy loss, and depression during and after pregnancy.