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Issues Ment **Health Nurs**. 2006 Oct;27(8):817-35.

## **Mental health of mothers caring for ventilator-assisted children at home.**

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### **Abstract**

The complex management of ventilator-**assisted children** cared for in the **home** can place emotional and **mental** strain on parents, in particular, **mothers**. The purpose of this study was to explore the relationships among functional status of the child, impact of ventilator-assistance on the family, coping, social support, and depression in **mothers caring** for ventilator-**assisted children at home**. Thirty-eight **mothers** participated in the study. Almost half of the **mothers** experienced depressive mood symptoms. Impact on family was positively related to depression and social support was inversely related to depression. In addition, social support was a significant predictor of depression. The findings show that the high demands related to the care of ventilator-**assisted children** can be a significant risk factor for poor **mental health** outcomes of those **mothers** providing care at **home**. Interventions by **mental health** and pediatric nurses should focus on enhancing **mothers'** coping skills and assisting **mothers** in accessing a positive social network to help mediate the stress related to **caring** for their child.

PMID: 16938786 DOI: [10.1080/01612840600840588](https://doi.org/10.1080/01612840600840588)

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