

Dekel Lab Achievements & Mentions in the News

Lab Achievements

Dr. Dekel was awarded an R01 grant from the NIH National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) titled “Establishing a Screening Tool for Early Detection of PTSD Following Complicated Childbirth” to develop an Artificial Intelligence (AI) model for the early detection of PTSD following childbirth trauma. (September 2025)

Dr. Dekel is the recipient of an 2025 MGH Executive Committee on Research (ECOR) ISF Research Award supporting her work on detecting childbirth-related PTSD (CB-PTSD) using AI-based computational models. (July 2025)

Congratulations to Dr. Dekel for being named the recipient of the 2025 International Society for Traumatic Stress Studies (ISTSS) Distinguished Mentorship Award! (May 2025)

We are very proud that Dr. Dekel has been awarded the Harvard Medical School's Joint Committee on the Status of Women (JCSW) Shirley Driscoll Dean's Leadership Award for the Enhancement of Women's Careers! (May 2025)

Dekel Lab clinical research coordinator Onyekachi Agwu was named an MGRI Image Awards finalist. (December 2024)

PhD student Meike Blecker received a stipend from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for doctoral candidates conducting research outside of Europe. (September 2024)

Postdoctoral research fellow Hadas Allouche Kam, MD, received funding from a Fellowship Grant from the Hadassah Medical Center, Jerusalem, Israel, as well as a Fellowship Grant from The American Physicians Fellowship for Medicine in Israel (APF). (August 2024)

The Dekel Lab is excited to welcome new postdoctoral research fellow Kelimer Lebron, who is funded under an NIH/NICHD Research Supplement to Promote Re-Entry in Health-Related Research granted to Dr. Dekel. Her project is titled Childbirth Trauma and Maternal PTSD: Examining Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Maternal Mental Health. (February 2024)

Congratulations to our clinical research coordinator, Christina Pham, who was a finalist in the 2024 Massachusetts General Research Institute (MGRI) Science Images competition!

The Dekel Lab is grateful to receive our new NIH grant to study The Effects of Expressive Writing Following Traumatic Childbirth. (2023)

Bravo!!! Dr. Dekel has been awarded a 5-year NIH R01 grant to study 1,000 pregnant women and reveal the risk factors and course of PTSD following childbirth and its impact on the developing child. Thank you NICHD for supporting science to promote maternal mental health.

Dr. Dekel is the recipient of the 2022 MGH ECOR ISF Research Award in support of her work on PTSD following childbirth

Dr. Dekel was awarded in June 2021 an NIH grant to promote diversity in health related-research. Congratulations!

Great news! Our lab has received Harvard's 2020-2021 Mind Brain Behavior Research Relief Faculty Award!
Dr. Dekel was awarded an NIH grant entitled "Neural underpinnings of postpartum adaptation following traumatic delivery and implications for infant development"

Dr. Dekel was awarded an NIH grant entitled "Predictive modeling of peripartum depression"

Dr. Dekel has been awarded the Harvard's 2020 Mind Brain Behavior Interfaculty Initiative faculty award!

Congratulations to Dr. Dekel for receiving Mass General's Executive Committee On Research Award, 2019 Deliberative Interim Support Funding

Congratulations to Dr. Dekel for receiving the 2019 CFD Award

Highlighted Mentions in News

2025

Mass General Brigham interviewed Dr. Dekel about her motivation for studying CB-PTSD in the article Advancing Maternal Health: How Mass General Brigham Researchers Are Shaping the Future of Care. January 23, 2025

<https://www.massgeneralbrigham.org/en/about/newsroom/articles/advancing-maternal-health>

2024

Dr. Dekel was interviewed for the podcast episode Why 'It's Just Postpartum Depression' Misses the Mark for So Many Mothers, for the podcast series Making Sense of Pregnancy: What Experts Want You to Know About Your Body. December 18, 2024

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/why-its-just-postpartum-depression-misses-the-mark/id1779600854?i=1000680827546>

Dr. Dekel was featured in this article sharing her presentation as the keynote speaker at the December 2024 event "Birth Trauma: Understanding Its Origins and the Urgent Need to Do More webinar", hosted by the Policy Center for Maternal Mental Health. December 13, 2024

<https://policycentermmh.org/birth-trauma-ptsd-understanding-its-origins-and-the-urgent-need-to-do-more/>

Psychology Today interviewed Dr. Dekel about the reality of CB-PTSD in mothers in the article Helping Women Navigate Postpartum Mental Health. November 26, 2024

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/brainstorm/202411/helping-women-navigate-postpartum-mental-health>

The Dekel research intern Eunice Chon was featured in MGH's Meet the Summer Research Students article. August 27, 2024

<https://mgriblog.org/2024/08/27/students-the-next-generation-of-medical-innovators/>

The NICHD featured Dr. Dekel in their Research Profiles series, highlighting her work to advance maternal mental health care. August 15, 2024

<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/research/atNICHD/NICHD-research-profiles>

Dr. Dekel was interviewed for the MGH Advances in Motion article featuring her lab's work, Establishing Postpartum PTSD After Traumatic Childbirth. August 6, 2024

https://advances.massgeneral.org/neuro/article.aspx?id=1581&pk_vid=c8cd60e123ac5f291760645277dbaa44

The Dekel Lab's work is featured in the article on the HealthyDebate site, Childbirth PTSD Is All Too Common. AI May Help Remove Stigma and Improve Care. May 29, 2024

<https://healthydebate.ca/2024/05/topic/childbirth-ptsd-ai/>

Dr. Dekel was interviewed in this article published in The Hill: Widespread Disrespect, Abuse in Maternity Care Leave Mothers with Lasting Trauma. May 28, 2024

<https://thehill.com/maternal-mental-health/4616291-widespread-disrespect-abuse-in-maternity-care-leave-mothers-with-lasting-trauma/>

This Pharmacy Times article presenting the Dekel Lab's work features an interview with Dr. Dekel: Study Finds AI Models May Help Accurately Assess PTSD in Women After a Traumatic Childbirth. May 14, 2024

<https://www.pharmacytimes.com/view/study-finds-ai-models-may-help-accurately-assess-ptsd-in-women-after-a-traumatic-childbirth>

Dr. Dekel was interviewed in this Healio article, Q&A: AI Uses Patient Narratives to Identify Postpartum PTSD. May 6, 2024

<https://www.healio.com/news/primary-care/20240506/qa-ai-uses-patient-narratives-to-identify-postpartum-ptsd>

This WebMD article, Postpartum PTSD: Right Diagnosis Can Help Mothers and Babies, features an interview with Dr. Dekel. May 6, 2024

<https://www.webmd.com/mental-health/mental-health-types-illness>

Dr. Dekel provided an expert perspective as a contributor to the Healio article Perinatal PTSD Significantly Increased from 2008 to 2020, Varying Based on Race, Ethnicity. April 25, 2024

<https://www.healio.com/news/womens-health-ob-gyn/20240425/perinatal-ptsd-significantly-increased-from-2008-to-2020-varying-based-on-race-ethnicity>

The IndiaAI website presented the Dekel Lab's findings in their article A Study Says an AI Model Has Potential to Detect Risk of Childbirth-related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. April 21, 2024

<https://indiaai.gov.in/article/a-study-says-an-ai-model-has-potential-to-detect-risk-of-childbirth-related-post-traumatic-stress-disorder>

The MedicalResearch.com site interviewed Dr. Dekel in the article featuring our lab's work, Mass General Study Evaluates AI Narrative[s] to Detect Childbirth-Related PTSD. April 19, 2024

<https://medicalresearch.com/mass-general-study-evaluates-ai-narrative-to-detect-childbirth-related-ptsd/>

MGH Psychiatry News highlighted the Dekel Lab's work in their article Using AI and Natural Language Processing To Identify Postpartum Women with PTSD Related to Childbirth. April 15, 2024

<https://mghpsychnews.org/ai-and-natural-language-processing-to-identify-childbirth-ptsd/>

The British site Head Topics showcased the Dekel Lab's work in their article AI Model Shows Promise in Screening for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in New Mothers. April 13, 2024

<https://uk.headtopics.com/ai-model-shows-promise-in-screening-for-post-traumatic-50791270>

The Israeli platform Datilin shared our lab's maternal mental health research in the Hebrew article An Artificial Intelligence Model Can Accurately Detect Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder After Birth. April 13, 2024

https://datilin.co.il/%D7%9E%D7%95%D7%93%D7%9C-%D7%91%D7%99%D7%A0%D7%94-%D7%9E%D7%9C%D7%90%D7%9B%D7%95%D7%AA%D7%99%D7%AA-%D7%99%D7%9B%D7%95%D7%9C-%D7%9C%D7%A1%D7%A0%D7%9F-%D7%91%D7%9E%D7%93%D7%95%D7%99%D7%A7-%D7%9C%D7%90/#google_vignette

News Medical Life Sciences interviewed Dr. Dekel in their article presenting our work, AI Model Can Accurately Screen for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder after Childbirth. April 12, 2024

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20240412/AI-model-can-accurately-screen-for-post-traumatic-stress-disorder-after-childbirth.aspx>

The IndustrialNews site described the Dekel Lab's innovative findings in their article AI Program Can Help Identify Signs of Childbirth-related PTSD. April 12, 2024

<https://industrialnews.co.uk/ai-program-can-help-identify-signs-of-childbirth-related-ptsd/>

The National Institutes of Health featured the Dekel Lab's work on their site: AI Model Has Potential to Detect Risk of Childbirth-related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: NIH-Funded Study Suggests Model Could Identify Large Percentage of Those at Risk. April 11, 2024

<https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/ai-model-has-potential-detect-risk-childbirth-related-post-traumatic-stress-disorder>

Massachusetts General Hospital interviewed Dr. Dekel in their article presenting her lab's work, Mass General Study Identifies an AI Model That Can Accurately Assess PTSD in Postpartum Women. April 11, 2024

<https://www.massgeneral.org/news/press-release/ai-method-identifying-risk-childbirth-related-ptsd>

ScienceDaily shared the Dekel Lab's work in the article AI Model Can Accurately Assess PTSD in Postpartum Women. April 11, 2024

<https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2024/04/240411130158.htm>

The Dekel Lab's maternal mental health research was featured in the Mirage News article AI Model Accurately Assesses Postpartum PTSD: Mass General Study. April 11, 2024

<https://www.miragenews.com/ai-model-accurately-assesses-postpartum-ptsd-1213044/>

Our lab's work is highlighted in the Eurekalert article AI Model Has Potential to Detect Risk of Childbirth-related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. April 11, 2024

<https://www.eurekalert.org/news-releases/1040826>

Dr. Dekel was featured in the panel discussion Addressing Trauma through Holistic Support, hosted by the Policy Center for Maternal Mental Health in its 2024 Maternal Mental Health Forum. March 2024

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9qKWxEKqZRI>

Dr. Dekel was featured as a guest on The Joint Committee on the Status of Women (JCSW) Show podcast to discuss Breaking the Silence: Confronting Conflict-Related Sexual Violence. March 2024

<https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/breaking-the-silence-confronting-conflict-related/id1667625200?i=1000650467857>

The Dekel Lab's work was featured in the Healio platform's article Therapy after Traumatic Childbirth May Protect against PTSD Symptoms. March 13, 2024

<https://www.healio.com/news/womens-health-ob-gyn/20240313/therapy-after-traumatic-childbirth-may-protect-against-ptsd-symptoms>

The Dekel Lab's work is highlighted on the Medical Xpress website: Brief Psychological Interventions Can Reduce Post-traumatic Stress Symptoms after Childbirth. February 22, 2024

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2024-02-psychological-interventions-traumatic-stress-symptoms.html>

The Dekel Lab's systematic review and meta-analysis publication is spotlighted in the Massachusetts General Hospital press release Brief Psychological Interventions Can Reduce Post-Traumatic Stress Symptoms After Childbirth. February 21, 2024

<https://www.massgeneral.org/news/press-release/brief-psychological-interventions-can-reduce-ptsd-after-childbirth>

The Dekel Lab's work is featured in the article Maternal Health Awareness Day: How Mass General Researchers Are Working to Help. January 23, 2024

<https://mgriblog.org/2024/01/23/today-is-maternal-health-awareness-2024/>

The Dekel Lab's work was highlighted in an NIH NICHD Science Update: Questionnaire Could Identify Emotional Responses Leading to PTSD after Childbirth, NIH-Funded Study Suggests, January 8, 2024

<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/newsroom/news/010824-questionnaire-PTSD>

The research of the Dekel Lab is highlighted in the MGH Psychiatry News article Using a Questionnaire to Effectively Screen for Childbirth-Related PTSD. January 8, 2024

[https://mgpsychnews.org/pcl5-to-screen-for-postpartum-ptsd/](https://mgropsychnews.org/pcl5-to-screen-for-postpartum-ptsd/)

The Dekel Lab's work is featured in the Massachusetts General Hospital Research Spotlight article: Establishing the Validity of a Diagnostic Questionnaire for Childbirth-related Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. January 3, 2024

<https://www.massgeneral.org/news/research-spotlight/validity-diagnostic-questionnaire-childbirth-related-ptsd>

This Massachusetts General Hospital Research Spotlight article features the Dekel Lab's work: Screening for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder Following Childbirth Using the Peritraumatic Distress Inventory. January 3, 2024

<https://www.massgeneral.org/news/research-spotlight/screening-for-ptsd-following-childbirth-pdi>

2023

The Dekel Lab's research was highlighted in an NIH NICHD Science Update: Questionnaire May Detect Childbirth-Related Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, NIH-Funded Study Suggests, November 21, 2023

<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/newsroom/news/112123-PTSD-assessment>

MGH Psychiatry News featured the Dekel Lab's research: Focusing on the Psychological Consequences of Traumatic Childbirth. July 17, 2023

[https://mgpsychnews.org/sharon-dekel-phd-focusing-on-the-psychological-consequences-of-traumatic-childbirth/](https://mgropsychnews.org/sharon-dekel-phd-focusing-on-the-psychological-consequences-of-traumatic-childbirth/)

Mind Blossom, a nonprofit organization promoting mental health, featured Dr. Dekel in a livestream interview discussing maternal mental health, including the Dekel Lab's research. Hosted on the Mind Blossom livestream. June 7, 2023

https://www.linkedin.com/uas/login?session_redirect=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.linkedin.com%2Fevents%2Fletstalkmentalhealthandmotherh7071944124928512001%2F

The Dekel Lab's work is featured in the MGH News article Anna's Story: Healing After a Traumatic Birth, describing the healing process of a woman who experienced traumatic childbirth and became a participant in the Dekel Lab's research. May 22, 2023

<https://www.massgeneral.org/psychiatry/news/anna-story-healing-after-traumatic-birth>

Dr. Dekel Interviewed about maternal PTSD following childbirth. Featured on News Nation television program, May 15, 2023

<https://www.facebook.com/NewsNationNow/videos/966298121066113/>

Our study shows that computational methods that analyze birth narratives can predict risk for PTSD following childbirth, featured on NIH Science Update, January 2023

<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/newsroom/news/010923-postpartum-PTSD>

2022

Our work documents that women giving birth during COVID-19 experience psychological growth following childbirth Highlighted on Mass General's Advances in Motion, November 2022

https://advances.massgeneral.org/neuro/journal.aspx?id=2341&pk_vid=c8cd60e123ac5f291760644769dbaa44

Our research finds that traumatic childbirth during the COVID-19 Pandemic triggered positive psychological changes for some Highlighted on Mass General's Advances in Motion, November 2022

https://advances.massgeneral.org/neuro/journal.aspx?id=2341&pk_vid=c8cd60e123ac5f291760644781dbaa44

Our research reveals Black and Latinx women at heightened risk for developing traumatic stress following childbirth and depression Highlighted on Mass General's Advances in Motion, October 2022

https://advances.massgeneral.org/neuro/journal.aspx?id=2334&pk_vid=c8cd60e123ac5f291760644797dbaa44

Our research reveals Black and Latinx women more likely to experience negative childbirth outcomes during the COVID-10 Pandemic Highlighted on Mass General's Advances in Motion, October 2022

https://advances.massgeneral.org/neuro/journal.aspx?id=2334&pk_vid=c8cd60e123ac5f291760644810dbaa44

Dr. Dekel interviewed about the stressful experience of giving birth during COVID-19. Listen to this podcast! Pandemic Parents, July 12, 2022

<https://www.pandemic-parent.org/podcast/generation-covid-pt-2-pregnant-during-the-pandemic>

Our research on maternal psychological growth during COVID-19 covered in NewsMedical, News Medical, June 29, 2022

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20220629/Maternal-psychological-growth-and-improved-mother-infant-bonding-triggered-by-childbirth-during-COVID-19-pandemic.aspx>

Our recent studies show that many women suffer from traumatic childbirth during COVID-19 highlighted on Mass General's Psychiatry News, January 2022

<https://mghpsychnews.org/understanding-the-mental-health-impact-of-giving-birth-during-a-global-pandemic/>

2021

Our research reveals negative childbirth outcomes in women positive for COVID-19 highlighted on Mass General's Advances in Motion, November 2021

https://advances.massgeneral.org/neuro/journal.aspx?id=2098&pk_vid=c8cd60e123ac5f291760644590dbaa44

Dr. Dekel interviewed in an article on psychological growth when giving birth during the pandemic on Washington Post, July 2021

https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/pandemic-birth-moms-traumatic-growth/2021/07/16/d7f7e12e-ca22-11eb-a11b-6c6191ccd599_story.html

Highlights of Dr. Dekel's COVID-19 study on Mass General Advances in Motion, June 2021

https://advances.massgeneral.org/neuro/journal.aspx?id=1973&pk_vid=c8cd60e123ac5f291760644612dbaa44

Dr. Dekel talks about postpartum PTSD and COVID on the TODAY show on NBC, May 2021

<https://www.today.com/parents/bachelor-star-jade-roper-postpartum-ptsd-after-closet-birth-t218127>

NIH highlights our recent study on traumatic childbirth during the pandemic, January 2021

<https://www.nichd.nih.gov/newsroom/news/011921-childbirth-COVID-19>

Our research reveals the negative impact of COVID-19 on new mothers and their newborns, on Israel News, January 2021

<https://www.ynet.co.il/health/article/B1aapdUxu>

2020

Women with COVID-19 more likely to suffer acute stress during childbirth (coverage of recent COVID-19 maternal wellness project's finding) on Medical News, December 2020

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20201203/Women-with-COVID-19-more-likely-to-suffer-acute-stress-during-childbirth.aspx>

Postpartum Depression Common in Women with Childbirth-Related PTSD on MGH Psychiatry News, November 2020

<https://mghpsychnews.org/postpartum-depression-common-in-women-with-childbirth-related-ptsd/>

Postpartum mental health in the face of the pandemic on Boston Globe, May 2020

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/05/08/opinion/new-mothers-dont-fear-you-were-made-times-like-this/>

Dr. Dekel explains the notion of psychological growth following trauma on The American Lawyer, May 2020

<https://www.law.com/americanolawyer/2020/04/05/how-coronavirus-related-stress-could-lead-to-post-traumatic-growth/?slreturn=20251016155511>

The 'fourth trimester' and plight of new mothers during a pandemic on Boston Globe Magazine, May 2020

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2020/05/06/magazine/fourth-trimester-plight-new-mothers-during-pandemic/>

Dr. Dekel talks about her research on COVID-19 and maternal mental health on Mass General Research Institute Blog, April 2020

<https://mghresearchinstitute.org/2020/04/16/exploring-the-mental-health-impact-of-covid-19-on-new-mothers/>

2019

Dr. Dekel talks about her research on Psychology Today, December 2019

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/traumatized/201912/post-traumatic-stress-disorder-result-childbirth>

"It's a Battle Scar": The Emotional Toll of C-Sections No-one Talks About on Harper's Bazaar, October 2019

<https://www.harpersbazaar.com/culture/features/a28689589/c-section-recovery-stories/>

What Is Postpartum PTSD? Interview with Dr. Dekel on Goop

<https://goop.com/wellness/health/postpartum-ptsd/?ref=newsletter>

Depression Screening Needed in Peripartum Period to Detect Delayed Onset and Fluctuating Symptoms on Mass General Advances in Motion, July 2019

https://advances.massgeneral.org/neuro/journal.aspx?id=1337&pk_vid=c8cd60e123ac5f291760644357dbaa44

Why #Metoo Matters in the Delivery Room, on The Establishment, March 2019

<https://theestablishment.co/why-metoo-matters-in-the-delivery-room/>

Featured interview with Dr. Dekel on the Mass General Research Institute Blog, February 2019

<https://mghresearchinstitute.com/2019/02/07/helping-mothers-recover-when-the-psychological-trauma-of-giving-birth-lingers/>

Dr. Dekel Interviewed As Featured Member of Postpartum Support International, Postpartum Support International

<https://postpartum.net/featured-psi-member-sharon-dekel-phd/>

2018

Q&A with Dr. Sharon Dekel: Understanding Postpartum PTSD, Advances in Motion

https://advances.massgeneral.org/neuro/article.aspx?id=1057&pk_vid=c8cd60e123ac5f291760643996dbaa44

Nearly Dying In Childbirth: Why Preventable Complications Are Growing In U.S., NPR

<https://www.npr.org/2017/12/22/572298802/nearly-dying-in-childbirth-why-preventable-complications-are-growing-in-u-s>

Mass General Awards and Honors, Mass General News

<https://www.massgeneral.org/news/article/mgh-awards-and-honors-august-2018>

2017

Severe Complications for Women During Childbirth are Skyrocketing - And Could Often be Prevented, ProPublica

<https://www.propublica.org/article/severe-complications-for-women-during-childbirth-are-skyrocketing-and-could-often-be-prevented>

105 Questions That Could Predict PTSD Risk, Science Magazine

<https://www.science.org/content/article/105-questions-could-predict-ptsd-risk>

PTSD Affects 1 in 11 New Moms... So Why Don't We Hear More About It? NBC Today

<https://www.today.com/parents/post-partum-ptsd-affects-1-11-new-moms-t111607>

2016

The Mothers Who Can't Escape the Trauma of Childbirth, The Atlantic

<https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2015/10/the-mothers-who-cant-escape-the-trauma-of-childbirth/408589/>