

Postpartum Risk Assessment in New Mothers

Questions to ask the new mother:

- How are you doing emotionally?
- How are your moods?
- What are you getting to eat? How's your appetite?
- Are you able to go to sleep after the baby does?
- Do you have any questions about depression or anxiety?
- Is being a mother what you expected?
- Who gets up at night with the baby?
- Are you getting help with the baby or housework?
- How's your husband/partner doing?
- Do you talk to friends?

Indicators of Risk:

- Previous depression, anxiety, or bipolar cycles
- Low social support, isolation
- Insomnia
- Excessive energy, little need for sleep
- Repetitive anxious fears
- Hx of Thyroid imbalance
- Rapid weight loss, no appetite
- Missing appointments
- Frequent calls or visits to provider
- Discomfort or Detachment from baby
- Over-concern, hypervigilant about baby
- Mood swings or irritability/anger
- Crying jags
- Excessive and unusual fatigue, either intensity or duration
- Too perfectly groomed, trying hard to be perfect

Interventions:

- Recognize and Reassure
She is not alone, it is not her fault, and with help she will get better. Help her reach out.
- Give Resources in Written Form
Postpartum Support International.
www.postpartum.net
800-944-4PPD support warmline
- **Follow up.** Chart it, and check back with her.