

## **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. Include her significant others.*
- Give Resources in Written Form  
**Postpartum Support International** [www.postpartum.net](http://www.postpartum.net)  
800-944-4773 (4PPD) support warmline  
  
**Baby Blues Connection** [www.babybluesconnection.org](http://www.babybluesconnection.org)  
1-866-616-3752
- **Follow up.** Chart it, and check back with her.

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