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
  800-944-4773 (4PPD) support warmline

  Baby Blues Connection www.babybluesconnection.org
  1-866-616-3752

- Follow up. Chart it, and check back with her.