

## Common Risk Factors

### ◆ History of mood disorders in self or family, such as:

- Bipolar Disorder
- Depression or dysthymia
- Postpartum depression
- Anxiety disorders, panic disorder, phobia, OCD
- Eating disorders: *anorexia, bulimia, binge eating, yo-yo dieting, etc.*

Any of these risk factors should be noted by case-taker during prenatal or postnatal interview with medical providers.

### ◆ Hormonal or biochemical imbalances

- Thyroid disease or other hormonal illnesses: *Cushings, Addison's, Graves', etc.*
- Other hormonal imbalances: *adrenalin, cortisol, estrogen, progesterone, testosterone, etc.*
- Unstable blood sugar: *i.e. gestational diabetes, hypoglycemia, etc.*
- PMS or early menopause
- Nutritional deficiencies: *vitamin B6, iron, niacin, folic acid, amino acid tryptophan, macronutrients and trace minerals (selenium, magnesium, zinc), etc.*

### ◆ Sleep disturbances

- History of insomnia or not receiving enough REM sleep  
(at least 2 blocks of 3 hours each, during every sleep cycle in the postpartum period)
- Apnea or body clock disorders

### ◆ Interpersonal problems

- Relationship struggles and conflict with partner
- Relationship conflicts with mother and family members
- Unsupportive partner, family, or workplace colleagues and employer

### ◆ Past traumas or losses

- History of sexual or physical abuse or neglect
- Unresolved reproductive losses: (i.e. miscarriage, infertility, ambivalent abortion, stillbirth, difficult birth)
- Traumatic or unresolved childbirth experiences

### ◆ Recent stresses

*Examples:* An illness in self/family; divorce; a move; a change in jobs; death, change in financial status, etc. Multiples birth or birth complications.

### ◆ Overwhelming circumstances

Cultural, environmental, and/or psychological barriers for support:

*Examples:* Chronic stress, poverty, homelessness, community violence, isolation, etc.

### ◆ Difficult interactions with baby

*Examples:* Colicky, premie, high needs, temperament differences; illness/injury, developmental delays, trouble breastfeeding, etc.