Common Risk Factors

- **History of mood disorders in self or family, such as:**
  - Bipolar Disorder
  - Depression or dysthemia
  - Postpartum depression
  - Anxiety disorders, panic disorder, phobia, OCD
  - Eating disorders: anorexia, bulimia, binge eating, yoyo dieting, etc.

- **Hormonal or biochemical imbalances**
  - Thyroid disease or other hormonal illnesses: Cushings, Addison’s, Graves’, etc.
  - Other hormonal imbalances: adrenal, 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.

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