



RISK FACTORS FOR POST-PARTUM DEPRESSION

Hormone Fluctuations: Estrogen and Progesterone interact with Serotonin which controls moods

Symptoms of Depression or Anxiety during Pregnancy: 50% increased chance of PPD

Personal or Family History of Mental Illness: 25% increased chance with history of depression/anxiety; 50% increased chance with history of bipolar; 25-30% increased chance of developing Post-Partum Psychosis with history of bipolar; increased risk of PPD if mother/sister experienced PPD

History of Hormone Related Mood Changes: history of PMS or PMDD (Pre-Menstrual Dysphoric Disorder); increased risk if you experienced depression with oral contraceptives/fertility drugs; thyroid disorders may occur post-partum

Negative Thinking Patterns: moms may experience *personalization* wherein negative situations are interpreted as being one's own fault or a reflection of one's inadequacies; *all or nothing thinking* wherein one feels that "always" & "never" characterize situations; *worrier or perfectionist personalities* wherein there are control issues

History of Abuse or Conflict with Parents: having children often activates our own childhood experiences and issues

Body Image Issues: if the baby weight is not coming off immediately one may feel characterized as lazy, over-indulgent, unattractive to your partner; often results in guilt and stress; history of eating disorders may be re-activated

Environmental Factors: stressful life events that occur during or after pregnancy; financial strain; *feeling of having limited support*; disappointments about baby's gender; colicky babies; sick newborns; complications due to infertility, pregnancy or delivery; unwanted/unplanned pregnancy; breastfeeding issues