Are You Asking The Right Questions?

It can feel awkward to begin a conversation with your patient about her mood during and following pregnancy. But as her provider you're a key part of her recovery.

1 in 5 women will experience a perinatal mood disorder. Even if you screen your perinatal patient may not be disclosing the extent to which she is suffering.

In addition to using the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Scale (EPDS) the following are questions you can ask your pregnant and postpartum patient to gauge how she is *really* feeling:

- Is there anything on the screening (EPDS) you completed that you would like to discuss further?
- Are you having thoughts that are scaring you?
- Are you able to sleep when the baby sleeps?
- Are you able to rest/relax when your baby is being cared for and monitored by someone else?
- Are you worried about the way you are feeling or thinking?
- Has anyone talked to you about postpartum depression and anxiety?
- Do you feel you have adequate support at home?
- Do you have a list of local resources for mental health professionals who are specially trained to understand and treat all perinatal mood and anxiety disorders?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell me about the way you are feeling or the thoughts you are having?

**Need further guidance? Call the PSI Perinatal Psychiatric Consult Line at 1-800-944-4773, ext 4**

**Tips for professional and family support:**

Do not assume that if she looks good, she is fine.

Do not assume if she says she is “fine” that she is fine. Ask again. Assure her you are a safe person with whom to share.

Do not tell her it’s normal to feel this way after having a baby.

Do not assume this will get better on its own.

Do encourage her to get a comprehensive evaluation.

Do take her concerns seriously.

Do let her know you are there if she needs you.

Do talk about postpartum depression and anxiety.

Do provide list of local resources.

**Supporting Mamas** is a nonprofit organization in the South Bay which is dedicated to providing free information, resources and support to women and their families. All of this information is available on our website at www.supportingmamas.org.