



THE POSTPARTUM STRESS CENTER

The Postpartum Stress Center, LLC • 610.525.7527 • www.postpartumstress.com

Suicide Assessment for a Positive EPDS Screen (#10)

Note: All clinicians administering the Edinburgh Screen should ask the following questions to every patient who answers #10 with a 1, 2 or 3. (“The thought of harming myself has occurred to me”)

These questions are in no particular order and have not been validated in any way. It is recommended that these or similar questions be part of the initial clinical interview when triaging a woman with postpartum depression.

- _____ How often are you having thoughts of hurting yourself?
- _____ Are you able to describe them to me?
- _____ Have you ever had thoughts like this before?
- _____ What happened the last time you had these thoughts?
- _____ Does your partner know how bad you are feeling? If not, why not?
- _____ Who do you consider your most primary connection for emotional support?
- _____ Does this person know how you are feeling? If not, why not?
- _____ Does anyone in your family know how you are feeling?
- _____ Have you ever acted on suicidal thoughts before?
- _____ How do you feel about these thoughts you are having?
- _____ Do you have specific thoughts about what you would do to harm yourself?
- _____ If you do have a plan, do you know what is keeping you from acting on it?
- _____ Are there weapons in your home?
- _____ Do you have access to medications that could be harmful to you?
- _____ Anything else you can think of that I can do right now to help you protect yourself from these thoughts?
- _____ Have you thought about what the implication would be for your baby?
- _____ Do you feel able to contact me if you feel you cannot stop yourself from acting on these thoughts?

Important Points to Keep in Mind:

- Be clear about your ability to help her
- Determine whether hospitalization is required
- Contact family members, if indicated, in her presence
- Initiate psychiatric contact
- Follow up with any and all requests (ex: weapons out of the house)
- Determine level of follow up (ex: “report in” phone calls to/from patient to assure safety)
- Do not avoid questions that make you uncomfortable