

Name of Journal: *World Journal of Psychiatry*

ESPS Manuscript NO: 31280

Manuscript Type: Minireviews

Understanding the pathophysiology of postpartum psychosis: Challenges and new approaches

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#### Abstract

Postpartum psychosis <sup>1</sup>is a severe psychiatric condition which affects 1-2 of every 1000 mothers shortly after childbirth. Whilst there is convincing evidence that the condition is precipitated by a complex combination of biological and environmental factors, as yet the pathophysiological mechanisms remain extremely poorly defined. Here, I critically review approaches that have been, or are being, employed to identify and characterise such mechanisms; I also review a recent animal model approach, and describe a novel biological risk model that it suggests. Clarification of biological risk mechanisms underlying disorder risk should permit the identification of relevant

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