

Submission
No 183

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

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Partially
Confidential

Iva had two pregnancy and births both through the midwife program, the midwife program is wonderful however the midwives hands are tied to some rules that I believe aren't common sense.

Both pregnancies I presented with low platelets, through out the pregnancy lots of talk about being kicked out of the program as I would be high risk, talk about having to have a cesarean and put under anesthetic because I cannot have an epidural as I would hemorrhage and bleed out, talk about if I fall I need to present to emergency straight away as I'll be internally bleeding due to these low platelets.

With my second pregnancy they wanted to induce me at 36 weeks as my platelets were so low (I felt completely fine, working and running my florist business and working 12 hours a day etc not fatigued, no bruising, some work related tiny cuts and not bleeding out) I kept bringing this up but my numbers were in the red so there was protocol, saw the hematologist- she had no idea what to do, I was belittled and was told the " I was quiet smart for a florist" when I would talk about all of my platelet numbers but no actual real physical evidence. She said she could give me steroids, to boost my platelets but I declined, as I went away and did my own research of the drug and I couldn't see any positives only making my platelets count number higher.

I saw a hospital obstetrician who couldn't even find the baby's heart beat, (I could feel the baby kicking me- so I wasn't worried, I was actually chuckling as a big fancy doctor who I just waited 2 hours to get checked out as midwives don't have much authority.) he said induction was necessary at 38 weeks now, and I asked him why and he said it was better than 36 weeks. After this appointment this gave me little faith in the doctors and also scared me that if I was to go into spontaneous labour this particular doctor could be on and he would be looking after me. A doctor who couldn't find a heard beat, actually had an electrical cord over my chest so he could plug the machine in. Very professional.

Next midwife appointment, we were booked in to be induced as that's what the doctor ordered. I was really fed up at this point and was over it. So just went along. We all tested positive for covid in the lead up to the induction, they had moved my induction back so I was out of isolation, but my husband was still in isolation which meant he could not come to the birth. We agreed that I would have the gell and be able to go home, as I only live 5 min from the hospital. I could labour at home with my husband but would need to go in solo to birth the baby or if things didn't ramp up I would need the drip.

I joked and said I'll just give birth in the car park so my husband could be present. I was told by the back up midwife that I would make a mess and bleed out everywhere, and not to do that. (my first birth my platelets were 69 and only lost 200ml , hardly any blood. So there was no actual evidence of bleeding out) I had gone in that day to get bloods done. Which I had been going weekly since 25 weeks to track my platelets

The lady taking my bloods asked when I was having the baby I said tomorrow, she asked if it was my first baby, I said no it was my second , she replied " was your first baby a good

sleeper?" I replied " yes I think so compared to the other stories I've heard" she then said " well this one's going to really be unsettled for you"

I was quite shocked, why would you say that to someone that was about to have a baby. At this point i was starting to really feel scared to birth in hospital

At 7 pm the night before having to go into hospital to start induction I got a phone call from my midwife saying my platelets were 120something (they had been hovering around the 70 ish) so the induction was cancelled and they were happy for me to just wait for baby to come . Obviously I was relieved and at this point i though it was the copious amounts of dandelion tea, soup, chinese prune tea etc I was eating which boosted them. I spent a lot of money and hours researching how to boost platelets, buying and cooking this type of food just to get my number up so the hospital was happy.

My midwife was curious to how my platelets could double and investigated further and did a recount and my platelets were back down to their normal 70 odd

We then found out that the blood counting machine broke that day, so pathologists had to count my platelets manually, which they said most pregnant people have climbing platelets where they stick together the machine counts is as one but it actually could be 2 or 3 platelets. And that this is a very common occurrence during pregnancy (midwife was told this by the head obstetrician at wollongong hospital)

It scares me that this was never talked about with the heamotologist, or the other obstetrician. I wonder how many women are induced over "low" platelets that is actually an error by pathology.

During my intensive research on a you tube video this platelet clumping was address and I mentioned this to the heamotologist and midwife and I was just dismissed as if how would I know anything

I ended up having an accidental free birth at home at 41 weeks , and I wish I kept the one towel that I birthed my baby on because there was hardly any blood. I got my delayed cord clamping which I was denied in hospital, I got to birth my placenta naturally.

I was told once I presented to hospital that I couldn't go for a hospital run home birth next time as this recent birth was at home and no record can be proven as it was us at home, even though paramedics confirmed No heamorrhage.

My baby was small 2.96kg (we are small people) imagine if I was induced at 36 weeks or even 38 weeks she would have been underweight and in the NICU for no reason, imagine how many babies and mothers are put through this red tape stress for just a number that is in the red , imagine the money this is wasting and valuable workers time and energy being taken up.

No wonder hospital staff are over worked and tired. Not one specialist caretaker could say anything positive (except the midwives)

The framework needs to be able to be moulded and bent for each case. More common sense please