

Submission  
No 589

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

**Name:** Name suppressed

**Date Received:** 8 August 2023

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Partially  
Confidential

## 1st birth

Forceps delivery due to distressed baby. Was offered vacuum delivery as baby was close but with a simple question from my husband "is that the best option?" The doc said "oh we can use forceps if you want" so we turned to the midwife who we had built a small rapport with so far through the birth. She professionally advised that there are benefits and downfalls to both. We chose forceps, as at a breastfeeding course the hospital offered, they said that the baby could have trouble breastfeeding after having a vacuum delivery.

Forceps included a episiotomy and tear (told it was 3rd degree but when pregnant with number 2, told it wasn't a 3rd degree).

Unfortunately I had trouble breastfeeding. The reason varied between midwives from - it was my daughters latch, the position, my stress. After being told that that level of pain was totally normal, I ended up with significant damage to both nipples. My baby vomited blood after feeding, blood from my nipple. Finally one midwife looked and said that they were the worst she had ever seen and told me to pump, rest and recover. I went home having to formula feed my baby due to the lack of support or getting to the bottom of the problem rather than dismissing it. On return to the hospital to visit the lactation consultant, she took the time to look at my nipples and noticed they were inverted. I needed nipple shields and was able to get baby back on and feeding comfortably and was able to manage the pain moving forward, pumping and giving rest when needed. I continued to feed until 18months.

Physio also saw me before I left hospital - and discussed healing after a 3rd degree, including a possible option of c-section for next birth (which was mainly short term pelvic floor exercises).

Cystocele prolapse at 12week check up with GP.

1 physio follow up appt at hospital - was not provided a women's health pelvic floor physio so was given the same message of pelvic floor exercises.

Progressed and developed a rectocele prolapse.

When pregnant for 2nd birth, I also developed a uterine prolapse with incontinence.

During my second birth, at every appt, I wanted to discuss birthing with prolapse. Midwives organised an appt with doc at hospital. The doctor dismissed it and told me she didn't need to talk to me as it's fine and there are no worries. I told the midwife that I had many questions and that I would prefer talk to someone so that I could go in to my next birth informed. The doc advised "try to avoid forceps this time"

I decided to do my own research and used this knowledge to get me through my next birth.

I arrived at the hospital 30mins before giving birth. I used my research to follow my body's lead and even though the midwife was telling me to push, I listened to my body. My body still tore and I need stitches, but not a significant tear. I decided that I would be leaving the hospital after the birth and not staying any more than I needed. I did however feel that once we made this decision, we did notice more of a rush to get us out of the hospital even though it was just after a shower that I left.

At my day 5 at home check up, I told the midwife I felt as though one of my stitches had torn, it was only after I asked that she looked. She then sent me to the hospital to have a look.

I was not offered any follow up with my prolapse issues. I unfortunately continue to have the same symptoms and prolapses. Although it is not something I like to share, it is something I feel passionate about changing as I do not want my daughter to suffer with the same.