

Submission  
No 762

## INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

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Partially  
Confidential

My story begins when I was 24, going in for endometriosis surgery the gynecologist asked me if he finds anything else does he have my permission to take it out. I didn't realise what at the time but he removed a fibroid about the size of a golfball from my uterine wall. This begins the high risk category as I had a myomectomy, and was categorised from the beginning of my prenatal care. Fast forward 3 years and we fell pregnant beautifully and at the time I had private health insurance, loved to follow the rules and found myself a private OB. I asked him in our initial appointment what his C section rate was and he was proud to say only 40% and nonethewiser I followed his directions. Things were normal all the way up to 33 weeks where he wanted to send me for a scan to keep an eye on the scar tissue of the myomectomy site.

I had the scan then walked into my next appointment with him where he rubbed his hands together and said get ready to have this baby on 15th November with the biggest grin on his face. He was booking me in without even consulting me. I was deflated. I knew nothing about informed consent but asked the question why, where he said I had a high risk of rupture and basically the uterus could erupt like if you were to have a car accident and the seatbelt squashed the uterus. I could bleed out and die and so could baby. My husband was scared. Quintessential OB move. I booked in with the receptionist my hospital date and they said oh that's before doctor goes to new Caledonia... Penny drop. Is he scheduling me before a holiday? I had no idea I had options. I went in for surgery on 15th November 2017 and my beautiful son was born. They administered far too much anaesthetic so I couldn't lift my hands and was numb up to my cheeks and couldn't breastfeed my baby for approx 2 hours. I suffered horrible vomiting and uncontrollable shakes. They weighed my son and injected him with vit K and hep b before he was placed on my chest. what worst was to come later.

Fast forward 2020. I fell pregnant and started the process of my VBAC. I made appointments with private midwives and then got in touch with the head OB at the Hospital to have him review my notes from my myomectomy and the C section, as he was an advocate for VBAC and homebirth. He told me he would support me in the midwife program and I would have access to him throughout the pregnancy. I felt so privileged. Again the male OB taking my power away. Truth be told he supported every decision I made and never argued the point. He apologised that I ever had the first C section, and when we ordered that 33week ultrasound for my first birth we discovered there was nothing on it to indicate I needed a C section. "Normal pregnancy". He spoke with the gynecologist who performed my myomectomy in 2014 and said there was no contraindication for vaginal birth and a C section was never necessary. I should NEVER have had the first C section.

At 36 weeks the pressure started to be put on me and it was revealed to me that I needed to co-operate if the rest of the hospital was going to leave me alone and let me be under the care of the OB. I was told I needed a scan to determine size of the baby to cooperate. I did it under coercion and they declared he was measuring to be born at 4.4kg. he came out at 3.48kg so another pressure that was totally unnecessary to rush birth. I was prepared to go to 42 weeks no interventions. At 40.4 my waters ruptured. I made the mistake of notifying the hospital and put on a time straight away.... Labour started 28 hours later and the hospital was calling me to come in. I declined. I eventually developed chorioamniotitis. I was informed I needed to get the baby out soon and agreed to a C section.

My husband said no wait can we talk about this. And I just surrendered that I wanted the baby out. I spent 3 hours waiting to go into surgery completed defeated and made no effort to help move baby along. I went into theatre so scared. My son was born and didn't breathe for about 8 minutes it was excruciating and he was sent off to NICU and I went off to recovery on my own sitting by myself no-one else around me for almost 4 hours thinking what just happened, why is no-one talking to me or checking in on me? . I spent days in hospital to clear both of us from infection, we were never infected just the placenta. An effort could have been made to bring the baby or not cut the cord upon birth so he had oxygen to help him breathe.

I have gone on to birth my 3rd baby at home completely unassisted also with premature rupture of membranes for 84 hours.