

Submission
No 1341

INQUIRY INTO BIRTH TRAUMA

Name: Name suppressed

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Partially
Confidential

Birth trauma! I didn't know what it was during my first baby, and it didn't actually hit me till at least 6 months later when I started researching VBAC and realizing what had happened to me. This made me have so many emotions from anger to sadness.

I was transferred at 33weeks gestation from a low-risk small hospital to a much bigger hospital. In the new hospital I didn't receive any continuity of care and needed to repeat my story with every different Doctor I saw at every antenatal appointment. I was told that I had to have an induction because that is what happens with every woman who has gestational diabetes and on insulin. I felt like I was put into a box and received no women centered care, because in the mind of the Obstetricians it is just what happens.

At 38 weeks gestation I was given my appointment to come back in a weeks' time and get the foley catheter inserted. I was told that I would come in on the Tuesday get the procedure done and then go home, return the next morning and get my waters broken to have a baby that day. Those were the instructions given, I was not given the risks and benefits of having it done or not having it done. The only risk I got told was I will have a stillbirth if I don't get induced because I'm on insulin, so it needs to be done.

When I arrived on Tuesday and got assessed I was told the foley catheter could not be used as the head of the baby was too high and I "HAVE" to get admitted to the ward. I'm angry that no one gave me the option to just go home and wait another week, I was only 39 weeks and in doing my own research for the policy at this hospital a women can go to 40 weeks on insulin. I was angry that no one explained every step what was going to happen once on the ward.

Once on the ward over the space of 4 days, Tuesday to Friday I was given 4 lots of Induction methods from cervidil tape to prostin gel. One of the times I was getting the prostin gel, it was done by a male Obstetrician, I was screaming and crying in pain. When he finished, he told me he also did a stretch and sweep. This made me so angry; I didn't know what to think. I was NOT informed that this was going to happen, I was NOT asked for consent. This is not OK!

On the Friday when I got transferred to birthing unit I was assessed and was told I still could not get my waters broken and now the foley catheter would be inserted. I broke down, I cried my eyes out, I was mentally broken. Then I had a female obstetrician 'Lecture me'. She said, "what did you think the induction process was going to happen overnight" Yes that's exactly what I thought after my appointment at 38weeks when I was told baby will be born on the Wednesday the day after the insertion of the catheter. Being a first-time mum of course I didn't know any better. Then she went on to say that I could not have a caesarean at this point because I will end up staying in the hospital for 7 weeks from infections, so I MUST get the foley catheter in. At the same time as this Obstetrician was giving me what I felt like was a lecture, and I was crying and felt mentally broken, the Midwife and Student Midwife just stood there, not saying or doing anything. I felt so alone!

On the Saturday my waters got broken by an Obstetrician, I labored away then around 4am Sunday they were worried about my baby's lactate, they tried to get a lactate done but were not successful. I ended up having the caesarean the obstetrician on Friday said I was not allowed to have.

It wasn't until I went back for my second baby that there was no documentation written about the lactate of my baby. The reason the caesarean happened according to the documentation written by the clinical professionals was 'FAILURE TO PROGRESS' I was so angry with this. Especially because I had to keep repeating myself when asked why the first caesarean had happened. They looked at me like I was lying, they would tell me, no that's not what happened. I think I would know what happened, I remembered it like it was just yesterday because it was traumatic. Not once was I told with my first that the caesarean happened due to failure to progress.