

Birth Story of Maddalyn
November 28, 2000
5:00 am

It was November 27, 2000. I was on my way to what was to be my last sonogram (this was the third in 2 weeks). The sonogram was at 1 PM. I was now 43.3 weeks pregnant. My midwife and I were monitoring the pregnancy carefully because of the postdates. My baby was growing well so we knew the placenta was functioning properly. While I was being scanned the sonographer told me that I was having contractions. At this point I could not feel them. I had at least 4 while on the table. She also told me that she was scoring the baby 6/8 on the ultrasound.

2 points were taken off for no fetal breathing movement. She said that in her experience, babies are born within 24-48 hours after this breathing movement is no longer seen. As I was leaving, the sonographer said, "I like you, but I don't want to see you here again without a baby in your arms." We laughed and I headed home. On the drive home I called my midwife Paulette (also the midwife I am apprenticing with) and told her what was going on. I was now starting to notice the contractions, but they were every 15 minutes or so apart.

I got home and the kids were outside playing. I decided to take castor oil (4:30 PM), since I was so ready to be in labor and I didn't want it to stop. In hindsight that was unnecessary. I was just so ready to have my baby in my arms. It just so happens that everyone I knew called me that day to check on me. I told them about the scan and that I was having contractions. I called my husband and just gave him the heads up that I might be in labor. It was around 5 PM by now.

Still having little contractions every 15 minutes or so we ate dinner (ziti pasta) around 6:30 PM or so and I started to clean up. I was still having contractions but I still really didn't feel like I was in labor. Around 7:30 PM I started to vacuum the living room. I just wanted everything picked up if this was it. My husband was telling me to leave all that to him and he would take care of it later. I just felt like I needed to be up, and moving around. I went to the restroom and this was the first sign of bloody show.

We started timing contractions around 7:45 PM. I would be doing something and just yell out for Steve to write the time down with each contractions. I still continued to move around cleaning up little things here and there. By about 9 PM Steve really looked at the paper and the average of the contractions was 7 minutes apart The contractions were still very sporadic 10 minutes, then 2 minutes, then 10 minutes, then 7 no pattern at all.

I was still in "denial" about the whole situation, but Steve insisted that I call the midwife and clue her in. I called Paulette and said that I was not sure if I was even in labor, but that this was going on. She said that she wanted to come over even if it was a false alarm. So by now the castor oil is really taking effect and I am starting to feel the contractions down in the pubic area. My cervix was drawing up and I started to get that familiar twinging feeling. Paulette arrived around 10:30 PM. I was sitting on the birth ball by now and was making a little noise with contractions.

My first labor check was at 10:45 PM. I was 4cm/95% effaced/O station. FHR was 133, no decels. Ctx. were 30-45 seconds duration and 3-4 minutes in frequency. I helped Paulette make the bed with a plastic sheet and set up all the necessary birthing supplies. I continued to be chatty at this time and listened to my husband rattle off baby names of a site on the Internet. Paulette started making calls to the assistants to inform them of the situation.

12:05 am (11/28/00) - I was now having to really work with the contractions. I was on my hands and knees leaning over the bed. I was starting to feel pressure in my tailbone with contractions now. It was getting serious now. I was now telling Steve to stop asking me about baby names because I was not longer able to listen outwardly with ctx. I was now tuning out the room with contractions (FHR was 131). I got up to go to the restroom. I straddled the toilet for a while. I seemed to take some of the back pressure away. I was shaking uncontrollable at this point I knew I must be in transition.

1 :47 am - Amy and Judith arrive. Amy is Paulette's partner and Judith is my counterpart in the ATM program.

1 :57 am - I am still straddling the toilet. Paulette and Judith take turns doing counter pressure on my back.

2 :02 am - VE: 7 cm/95% effacement! + 1 station. FHR was 120's-130's. I decide that it is time to get into the tub. I want the water HOT. Hotter than I can stand normally, but it just doesn't seem to make my back feel better. I try side laying in the tub (I have a garden tub). This seems to help a little bit I am really huffing and puffing with the ctx. now. The back pain is almost unbearable with contractions, but I can still tolerate it as long as I am still. I start to feel faint My BP is a little low so Paulette decides I need to get out of the tub for a while. I don't want to get out, but at that point I guess I am looking for something different to do.

4:00 am - I am now laying on the bed on my left side. FHR 131-138. I have a heating pad on my lower back and a cool washcloth on my forehead. I want pressure on my back, but then as soon as Judith touches my back I tell her not to. She later kids me about this. Laying down was the only way I could deal with the ctx. at this point I don't want to move because it just sets off another contractions . I am drinking water throughout labor. I keep feeling like I need to urinate, but just cannot mentally make myself get up and move.

4:14 am - Before deciding that I can get up and go to the restroom I want to be checked. I have the mental thing

in labor. I want to know where I am in dilation. I am about to find out how stupid this can be. I am still 7cm. Paulette does not tell me this and just says, "Well you have a little more to go." I yell at her, "I know that means I am the same right." She just laughs and says I know her so well. I would laugh about this after the birth, but not then. I make my way by crawling on my hands and knees to the toilet with an incredible urge to urinate. I make it there just in time to have a major, whooping ctx. while standing above the toilet. I felt like I had enough strength to break the back of the toilet lid. I am still not able to urinate. I stand up and make my way back to the tub. The toilet is full of bloody show. I make some stupid comment about how something is going on now. Paulette laughs and said, "No. Really."

4:30 am - I am in the tub now. Again the back pain is so severe. The ctx. are only felt really in my cervix now. I just sit there and veg. out. I am in that stupor of transition. From the time I got into bed I was really having to fight the urge not to push every other contraction. It was not irresistible, but it was there. I now asked Paulette to check me again, because I am feeling more pressure after my little episode on the toilet. She checks and says all that is left is a little anterior lip and the baby is lower.

4:50 am - I am still in the tub with the hot water. I am having a harder time dealing with the back labor now. I am yelling now, "COME OUT! COME OUT! COME OUT!" Paulette tells me to turn over on my hands and knees to relieve some of the pressure at my tailbone. Amy is now pouring water over my back and I tell them that I think my bag of water has broken. It is actually only the water from Amy running down the back of my legs.

4:56 am - Within a couple of minutes I start pushing like there is no tomorrow. It is uncontrollable now. Paulette checks and the head is right there. I didn't want a water birth so I am told to stop pushing. Steve carries me under the arms to the bed. I am doing the really exaggerated walk like there is a head between your legs. =0) I throw myself backwards onto the bed completely on my back. The baby is crowning by the time I get to the bed and I just have this overwhelming urge to push. I don't seem to have one of those pushing stages with periods of rest in between. It is just one big urge and it doesn't stop until the baby is out I hate the burning feeling. It hurts like hell, but I am able to slow down the crowing stage at this point

4:59 am - I have SROM with clear fluids. The head is born right after this. Paulette tells me that I have to stop pushing because the cord is around the neck once (the cord in not cut). For someone who couldn't seem to stop pushing when I was walking over to the bed, when my babies life was on the line I did it in a heart beat Her head comes out purple. Later Steve tells me he thought that was normal, because Paulette was so collected about it.

5:00 am - My baby is somersaulted out, so she doesn't have to cut the cord. She is born into her daddy's hands and is placed on my abdomen after Paulette tells Steve to put her there. When she came out he laid her down in the fluid on the chux pad. He was just so caught up in the moment that he didn't think to give her to me I guess. We *didn't* know what the sex of the baby was before this. I asked Steve to look and he said *it* was a girl. Wow its over. I have a first degree laceration that requires no stitching.

5:05 am - Baby latches on for the first time and screams whenever she is taken off.

5:11 am - Placenta is out. I am given a dropper full of Shepard's Purse because I am bleeding a little too much for the comfort of the midwife.

My kids had slept through the entire night. Towards the end of the labor, I told Steve to wake up our oldest daughter after the baby was born. We had talked about her being present for the birth, but she just didn't feel comfortable being present with all the blood and birth fluids. She did though ask to cut the umbilical cord. So after things were cleaned up a little bit and the cord had stopped pulsing, we asked her to cut the cord. She was still a little apprehensive at this time of the morning, but after we talked about it for a little bit she decided that she would like to cut it. We got it all on tape.

My mother in law is a godsend. She stayed up praying all night for me during my labor and birth. Whenever I attend a birth for a client, she is up praying that God will give us the wisdom and the laboring mother the stamina that is needed during a labor and delivery. On this night she was praying for my comfort and for the safe passage of her sixth granddaughter and 12th grandchild.

Newborn exam - Baby girl, 9# 4oz., 22 inches long

This was my first homebirth. I had 2 in the hospital with epidurals, and 1 other in the hospital with a CNM unmedicated. I am asked if it was harder than the others, and my only answer is I would have the homebirth again in a heartbeat

If you ask anyone who knows me, I tend to be long winded. So if you made it to the end of my saga I thank you. And I thank all that attended me and helped me make my birth so memorable. I love you all. This is what helps me in my pursuit of midwifery. This is the kind of experience that I hope to bestow on the women I serve. This is what it is all about.

Lisa Lynn Black
2nd year Midwifery Student
Association of Texas Midwives Program Mom to Steve for 11 years
Mom to Jordan (8), Chandler (5), Grasy (2) and Maddalyn (2 months and 17 lbs.)
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