

Welcome

Carys Louise

August 6, 2014

10:11 a.m.

7 lbs. 10.5 ounces

19.5 inches

Tuesday, July 29 You had just gone for a prenatal at your midwives and based on the protein in your urine they sent you for monitoring at the hospital. After a few hours of monitoring, your levels were more regular and they sent you home. The midwives wanted you to do a 24 collection, to see how your levels were over a longer period of time, and were going to discuss results at your next appointment.

Tuesday, August 5 We had planned to meet at 2:30 to review some comfort measures to help you in your final weeks of pregnancy, and just spend some time together. However, at 12:42 the midwives asked you to come in earlier than your 4:00 scheduled appointment to review your lab results from the previous week. I received a message at 1:15 p.m. that said "Ok, I'm going to the hospital. I'm having to be induced". When I spoke with you on the phone, we decided that Carys just had to keep things exciting, and come before anyone was ready. You had gone home to get bags ready, have lunch, and just take a moment to relax. I reminded you to talk to Carys, and let her know that soon she would be in your arms.

Later that night I assumed you would be going to sleep soon, so I sent a few reminders about relaxing, talking to Carys, and let you know you could feel free to call anytime to just talk. It can be nice to talk through things, but I suppose you had lots of visitors that day and were talked out (I later found out that wasn't true, but you had stayed up a lot of the night talking with your mom and had started to have contractions throughout the night as well which was affecting your sleep).

I woke up at 6, and made sure my phone ringtone was on. When I checked my phone again at 7, I thought I might have missed something. At 8 a.m. I felt certain they would be beginning pitocin, if not already. I checked my facebook messages as well thinking maybe your phone had died. I think this was doula intuition telling me something was happening and to be prepared; thank goodness I was because when I received a call and message from Casey at 8:33 he said you "were on Pitocin and starting to have really bad contractions." I found out later that shortly before his message, they had broken your water to relieve pressure from the bulging bag. They had also started pitocin at that time, and since you were already 4cm and had been having contractions on your own through the night, they started very intensely. I replied that I was getting ready to leave my house, but in the meantime, he could have you change to some other positions which would allow your uterus to work more efficiently with less discomfort.

At 8:42, he replied that you were getting pain medication (Stadol) and they would do an epidural in a while. Only three minutes later he said, "As in, I guess, right now." I replied that I wouldn't speed then because I suspected you'd be getting relief from the epidural and would get some time to rest. However, not in your case! The epidural had only taken the edge off the contractions also making them a little bit shorter, since they had become strong so quickly. The nurse had even turned the pitocin off once you had your epidural and by that point the contractions were still coming regularly.

Casey texted me that that you were "potentially at a 9 (cm)" at 9:32, less than an hour after from when he first let me know about the contractions you were experiencing. In my car, I actually exclaimed "Wow" and when I sent a message I said "Wow! Almost there. At exit in 10 minutes or less. I really began moving quickly at that point, worried I might miss Carys' birth entirely.

When I got to the hospital, I send a message to let Casey know, and he replied that you would begin pushing soon, and just to come in the room. A nurse confirmed that you wanted me in the room, before allowing me in, and I immediately saw that you were pushing so well when I walked in. You were completely focused, and in between, were able to completely relax and get the rest you needed.

You had your mom and Casey there supporting you, and I quickly went to your side and told you how amazing you were, and how proud I was of how far you had come already. I then held your hand as another contraction came and you began pushing. You were moving your baby down so well. Your mom commented that she could see that Carys had a lot of hair, and that must have been the cause of your heartburn. With each push, we could see more and more of her head and her long, dark hair. The midwife had you feel her head, and it really gave you a lot of encouragement that she really was coming down. We mentioned how a mirror could help as well, and the nurse brought one in so you could see what phenomenal progress you were making with each push.

I had gotten a wet washcloth for Casey so he could cool you down after each push since you were exerting so much effort with each contraction. He also began supporting your upper back while you were pushing to help you really curl up around your baby. It helped you push even more having your mom and Casey supporting your back and legs.

In practically no time at all, you commented that you could really feel the ring of fire. For the last pushes the midwife asked you to really curl up around your baby, and grab behind your knees and pull them back. With that added guidance, and all your determination, you were able to use your strength to bring Carys into the world at 10:11 a.m. You had thought she would be born in the afternoon, but things went so quickly and you pushed so well! She was born less than 2 hours after contractions got stronger, and only 28 minutes after Casey told me that you were about to start pushing soon!

Once Carys was born, the midwife unwrapped the cord that was lightly around her chest, and placed her on yours. Your first words were "I did it, I did it" and then you brought her up higher on your chest, so that her head was right in the crook of your neck. Casey seemed amazed that things had gone so quickly, but also amazed that his daughter was in your arms. He was completely focused on both of you.

After 5 minutes had passed, the midwife clamped the cord and asked Casey to cut the cord. We had him stop briefly while your mom got a picture of him for the momentous occasion. After close to ten minutes, the nurse asked whether they could take Carys to get her measurements, access her, and you agreed. Casey went to the warmer in the room with the nurse so he could continue to look at Carys. Whenever I looked over, they were always gazing at each other. Thought I couldn't tell from a distance, it looked as though she was responding to his voice.

While they were getting her measurements and height, 7 lbs. 10.5 ounces and 19.5 inches respectively, you were focused on being done with labor. In practically no time at all, you were ready to deliver your placenta as well. Once the placenta was delivered, your midwife let the nurses in the room know that you intended to encapsulate it. The nurse made sure you received a bag of ice to put it in, so that no one would need to rush to take it to the birth center.

In all the movements from you bringing Carys up to your chest, and moving around, your IV had come out on your right hand. The nurse decided rather than try the same hand again where the veins weren't prominent, she would put the IV in your left hand. At the same time the midwife stated that you had some bleeding from a tear and she would do the repair quickly. While both the nurse and the midwife were poking at you, you said "OW, that hurts!" and the nurse thought you were referring to her putting in the IV. You replied, "No, what she's doing down there hurts!" The midwife had not anticipated that your epidural was not very effective at all,

and you could still feel the sutures and the tugging. When she was assured from your responses that it was pain and not just pressure, she asked the nurse for local anesthetic to numb the area. Waiting for the anesthetic prolonged the time it was taking before you were left alone, and I could tell you were anxious to be holding Carys in your arms again. At 10:28, you asked why it was taking so long for them to bring them to you. Since your bleeding had slowed and they had taken Carys' vitals, the nurse quickly brought her back to you. Carys was actually a great distraction while the midwife finished up your stitches.

Once she was back in your arms, she was so calm and quiet. The nurse briefly attempted to get her to latch on and begin nursing, but she was so sleepy that she would latch really well, and then fall asleep. Actually sleep instantly claimed both of you, and you would only wake occasionally when Carys stirred on your chest to gently bounce her back to sleep. Casey was by your side during this time, and he was updating family that Carys was here already.

You had a lot of family that were very anxious to see you and Carys and hear about your triumphant birth, but at that point you just wanted to sleep. Even when the hospital brought in a really nice meal complete with cheesecake and strawberries on the side, you preferred to sleep, even though your breakfast had consisted of primarily broth.

The whole time you were resting I was gently massaging your legs in order to give you something rhythmic and soothing to focus on. It was great to see you and Carys so content especially after such a momentous morning.

When your dad and brother arrived, you were more alert and the medicine had worn off as well. He joked about how Carys wasn't smiling in her pictures and would need to learn how, and wanted pictures of Carys with all her family. He was especially encouraging about breastfeeding, and said that you had actually latched on to him before you latched on to Kim. Your brother jokingly said that must be why you look like him.

Once everyone had left to go get lunch, and Casey and your mom had gone with Carys for her first bath, we had a little while alone, and you were able to tell me how you felt about your birth. You said many of the things that were required at the hospital were exactly why you had chosen a birth center. We then talked about the positives; you had very few interventions, your labor was very intense but short, and your daughter was perfectly healthy at 7 lbs. 10.5. We guessed she would have weighed closer to 9 lbs. if she had gone closer to her due date. You

also decided to eat lunch, and had told me that the hospital food was much better than you had anticipated as well!

Shortly after the midwife came in to discuss how she would like you to be on magnesium as a precaution until the morning, and also to let you know that she had found out that as of August 1, placentas could no longer be released to leave the hospital. She said a nurse went to see if any paperwork needed to be signed to release placenta and discovered the new regulation. I asked, "What if it's already gone?" She said, "Well there's nothing we can do about that if it's already gone. It's not a concern." After she left the room, I then went down to my car to get a freezer bag, and another bag to put that one in so that Casey could leave with it, without drawing any attention. He also went and checked on your puppy and kitty while he was gone. You even had him take Carys first hat with him, so that they could quickly learn her scent.

While Casey was gone checking on your furry babies, you had more time to visit with your family. I also discovered that Carys had decided to be born on your parent's anniversary, which your mom was very excited about. When the lactation consultant arrived at 2:10, everyone had left except for you mom. She was very concerned about you, and didn't want to leave, however she didn't bring an overnight bag and wanted to go home and clean up (she probably wanted a nap as well). She asked you multiple times if you would be okay with her leaving. You assured her you would be fine, and I told you I planned to stay until Casey returned.

The lactation consultant was very patient with Carys and encouraged her to fully wake up before feeding. You began nursing Carys at 2:20 and she nursed until 2:45! She had been much more alert, and the advice from the consultant about watching for nutritive sucking and knowing Carys was satisfied when she had fluttery sucks instead of movement in her temples was great. You were also making a lot of colostrum, so Carys was getting great antibodies and nourishment in that short amount of time.

Shortly after she left, Casey returned from driving all over delivering the placenta and checking on your furry babies`. I let him know again how grateful I was that he called when he did and kept me updated so that I was able to be there for both of you, and witness Carys' birth. I told you again how impressed I was by the concentration you had showed despite your fast labor, and you joked that your whole labor wasn't like that, and if you were at the birth center, people at the Walgreens would have heard you laboring. We also decided that the next labor things

might slow down slightly because you wouldn't be induced, but that things would likely go pretty quickly.

Since all three of you had quite an eventful day, I decided to leave so that you could have quiet time with just your little family. When I left, Carys was sleepy and content in your arms, and Casey was admiring both of you.

In Awe,

Taylor