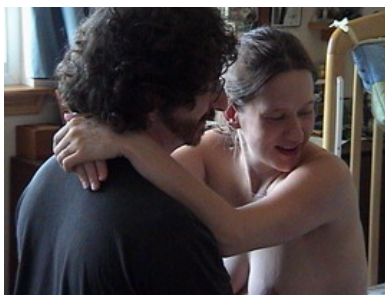


September 18, 2005

Tuesday August 23, I woke up early. For the first time in days, I didn't wake up with menstrual-like cramps and backache, but I couldn't get back to sleep. I decided to stay up and read for a while. As the morning progressed, the menstrual-like cramps and backache which I had become accustomed to returned. I finished Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince and attempted to do some chores (laundry, etc.). the cramping and backache became bad enough that I resorted to hot packs, and around 11:00am I realized that the cramping increased during what I had assumed were Braxton-Hicks contractions. I called Mark, my husband, and he headed home – calling the midwives on the way unbeknownst to me. Around noon, after Mark got home, we started timing my contractions. Because of the persistent backache, it was hard to determine exactly when contractions were occurring. They seemed to be happening about every 3 to 5 minutes and lasting 1 to 2 minutes. We timed contractions for about an hour and a half without any change in interval or duration and called the midwives to say that the contractions were “time-able”. Around 3:40pm we started timing contractions again. There wasn't much change in interval or duration, but the intensity had increased. We checked in with the midwives again and decided that they should start to head our way. We also contacted the rest of our birth team. In the meantime, I had resorted to the shower to decrease the intensity of the contractions and deal with the persistent backache.

Around 5:45pm, the midwives (Wendy and Karen) arrived. We decided to check how far I'd progressed. I was 5cm dilated – great news since this allowed me to get into the tub. I got into the tub, we started the first of my antibiotic IV's (I was positive for group B strep), and I had my first (and only) half hour without a backache. I progressed to 7cm fairly easily, then everything seemed to slow with 9 to 10 cm taking a couple of hours itself. During this time, I moved from tub to shower to birth ball (with the shower actually being the best source of comfort). When dilation seemed to slow, Wendy began checking my progress hourly to ensure that I wasn't stalled and that transfer to Group Health wasn't necessary. Each hour, I made steady, if slow, progress. At 10pm I received my second IV antibiotic. Around 2am, they tried to get my third IV antibiotic dose into me, but decided to forgo it when I couldn't stay still long enough.



Nancy & Mark at 5:20pm 8/23



Nancy & Kim at 7:40pm 8/23



Ruth, Mark, Nancy, Karen, & Wendy at 7:30pm 8/24

Finally around 5am, I was 10cm except for a small lip of cervix. We decided to break my membranes in get things moving. As I began pushing, Wendy was able to push the remaining lip of cervix out of the way. However, the baby had trouble getting under my pubic bone. Again we moved from one position to the next: on my back with my knees pulled toward my chest, on my side, on the toilet, hands-and-knees, lunge, lap squatting, the dangle. Through all of this, the baby's heart beat was steady. Finally, around 11am, we decided that we needed to perform an

episiotomy – the first Wendy had ever had to perform. Wendy was very conservative in the size of the incision and, in fact, needed to increase the size of the incision as it was confirmed that the episiotomy was helping but wasn't large enough. The baby's head finally emerged around 11:20am.

However, we weren't quite done yet. It became clear that the baby's shoulder was stuck under my pubic bone – shoulder dystocia. Luckily my birth team was able to get me onto my hands and knees quickly and Wendy was able to reach in and get the shoulder out – the Gaskin maneuver, named after Ina Mae Gaskin who learned the technique in Guatemala. At 11:22am, Miriam Alice Miller-Friday was finally born. She's had some Erbs palsy in her right arm from the shoulder dystocia, but this is rapidly disappearing with time and the help of an osteopath.

-Nancy



Ruth, Nancy, Mark, & Miriam 11:25 am 8/24



Nancy & Miriam 11:26 am 8/24



Ruth, Nancy, & Miriam 11:27 am 8/24



Nancy, Mark, & Miriam 11:31 am 8/24



Mark, Nancy, & Miriam at 3:10pm 8/24



Miriam August 28, 2005