

It was 3 a.m. Wednesday, August 23, 2006. I was 36.3 weeks pregnant. I had just stopped working the previous Friday because it was simply getting too hard. I awakened to pee. Then, I had to pee again. I couldn't understand why I had to pee so much. I then wondered if my water had broken so I called my cousin (who was my labor coach). My husband, who was my boyfriend at the time, was stationed in Italy so I was home alone. I was on the phone with my cousin when I felt the urge to pee again. This time, I had bloody show. I hung up with her and called my midwife. She told me to come in. I then called my husband to tell him that I thought it was time.

Side note: On Monday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, I had SO much energy. I went to the mall to shop for an outfit for my baby shower on August 26<sup>th</sup>. I started getting tired and decided to head home. I got home and started having contractions, about 7 minutes apart. I wasn't uncomfortable so I had some tea, took a Benadryl and went to sleep. I had a rental car that was due back on Monday but couldn't return due to fatigue. So, I awoke Tuesday, still feeling tired but THOUGHT I had enough energy to get to 30<sup>th</sup> Street Station in Philadelphia. I stopped on the way to get some banana pudding from a seafood restaurant that I loved. Well, by the time I returned the car I was too tired to move. My cousin's aunt had to come get me. She saw me and said: "I think it's about time." I wasn't due until Sept. 19<sup>th</sup> and told her that I was just tired.

Back to the story. My cousin picked me up and we were on our way to the Bryn Mawr Birth Center. I was contracting but still wasn't uncomfortable. We reached the birth center and there was a full house. The midwife checked my fluid and my water had indeed broken. She checked the heart beat and we headed downstairs, where the birthing suites were. Because all three birthing suites were occupied, I went into the living room area, which could be converted, if necessary. I was in the bathroom brushing my teeth. I was hungry and was going to walk to Wawa with my cousin. It was 6:30 a.m. I started feeling the contractions and the midwife wanted to check me, just to have an idea of where I was. I was 4 cm and she told me to hold off on the walk. I was fine. I got in bed and talked. My aunt came and called my husband to provide updates. At 8:30 a.m. I started vomiting. I said to myself: "I must be transitioning." I was 6 cm. I was sleeping between contractions but VERY uncomfortable during them. (Oh, they gave me a shot of something to alleviate the vomiting.) I was checked again at 9 something and I was 9 cm. At 10:20 a.m., I felt this incredible pressure. My cousin looked at my face and ran to get the midwife (she has 3 kids of her own and guess she knew the look). The midwife came in and asked if I was ready to have a baby. My cousin jumped behind me and my midwife told me to push with my next contraction. I yelled: "I'm not ready." She laughed and said: "It's kinda late for that." I started pushing at 10:30 a.m. My son was born at 10:39 a.m. 3 contractions and 9 minutes of pushing. My husband was on the phone and my aunt took some great pics of him coming out. He weighed 7 lbs. 5 ½ oz. and 19 inches long.

My experience was great! The birth center was wonderful. I think they thought I was going to feel some kind of way because I had to deliver in the waiting area/extra room. I was fine. A lot of family members came and one of my best friends and her husband (one of them was going to be the baby's pediatrician). They joked everytime the doorbell rang knowing it was probably for me. I took my little boy home at 11 p.m. that night. My family really came together. I had NOTHING for him but was so content and sure that everything would work itself out. I still went to my baby shower, with baby in tow, on August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1 day after my 30<sup>th</sup> birthday.

