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Dear Dr. Apgar,

I was lucky enough to see you on "The Phil Donahue Show" and decided to write to you. I hope you will have time to read my letter & perhaps answer some of my questions.

Our third child was born Oct 4, 1973, a little girl, the first one after two handsome, healthy boys. She had trouble breathing immediately, was administer apgar that didn't respond fabably. She was placed in a incubator, and several ~~hours~~ hours later, the Doctors asked our permission that she been transfered to Thomas Jefferson Univ. Hospital - Phila.

We of course agreed, they (the Doctors in the Intensive Care, Newborns Unit) kept her on the Scalette & oxygen for 5 days, during this time they found out that she could not suck or swallow. E.E.G.'s were taken, they proved abnormal. Her Heart, Lungs, Kidneys were all good.

They kept her there for one month. Chromosome studies were done, they told us it was not our fault, and also toxoplasmosis tests were done, they proved negative. I don't know what other (cell, etc) tests were done, but we have been told the Congenital Birth Defect Angela has was not our fault, it just happened this way, her brain cells

did not form completely.
I would like to know your opinion. Is this possible, do these defects just happen. or do they have to come from an imperfect sperm or ova.

About me, I was 36 years & 1 month at delivery time.
My labor was about 4 hrs.
Hard labor - 2 hrs. I had saddle-block. the baby was delivered very easily, (she just slid out) My Dr (O.B.) said.
Gyn.
no trouble was detected before delivery. She didn't breathe on her own, 1st they thought she had too much mucos in her lungs, but still after they cleared out the lungs, she still had trouble breathing on her own.

My pregnancy was wonderful
I felt great all the time.
except at the beginning of my
third mo I did have bleeding
it just started suddenly one
morning upon awakening, it
was as if I passed my water
new fast. My Dr prescribed
progovera. The bleeding stopped
that day but I spotted for
several days. I was on the progovera
until he heard the heartbeat (5½ mo)
beginning of sixth mo June 1st visit.
That was the only trouble I
had - I really felt terrific, my
weight gain was 20 lbs.. I
really didn't expect anything so
serious to be wrong.

Our other two boys were born with no difficulty at all - although with my 2nd son I did have bleeding & spotting at 3½ mo. but no other trouble after that. My first son was born with no problems & no problems during pregnancy. I did have a blood test in the hospital after delivery, 2 days later (this baby) that I don't know what it was for.

Last summer while pregnant I felt so good - & had so much energy. I used to do some raking with my boys to help them - (My husband works 6 days - 6th day) My oldest age 12 would mow the lawn.

Would this have hurt the baby at all? at 6-7-8 mo preg. I only did this about 6 times after that - my back would hurt me, so I stoped that. Could you please ans some of my questions. I really want to believe the Dr. but I keep thinking that all this trouble must have started somewhere. I took no other medicine just what my Dr. prescribed, vitamins, iron pills & water pills. My iron count was very good - but the year before it took her long my blood pressure was good. The baby weighed 6 lbs 6 oz at birth - the other two weighed 7 lbs 2 oz each.

I've never had any mis-
carriges & no other pregnancies.
The baby is 6 months old now.
She has to be suctioned for
her mucus which she doesn't
swallow and
she is feed through a
gastrostomey tube in her
stomack. This makes some
suctioning because she bubbles
through her nose when she
is being feed. & any other time
except when she sleeps. She
only weighs 7 lbs now. She is
sitting now but she is so
pretty with beautiful big blue
eyes. We love her very much
but we can't understand how
something like this can happen
when you do really try to
get the best prenatal care.

don't take any drugs or even aspirin without permission, eat good foods which I really tried to do, plenty of sun & fresh air. I sleep good at nite - how can baby's like ours be living in the womb without the Doctor knowing something must be wrong.

Also have you ever heard of a baby like ours, or with something similar living any length of time. We have been told that our baby probably will not live too long.

Thank you for reading this letter.

Sincerely
Mrs. Rita M. Capelli
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