

Positive Induction Story – Baby Jack

Although very different from the ‘plan’ I’d made I had such a positive birth and really wished I hadn’t been so scared of an induction because it was a really positive experience for me!

So, I had a small bleed at 38 weeks and then in the week following had a couple of episodes of reduced movements and on balance (despite being gutted it meant my water birth on the midwife led unit was out the window) I just wanted my little man here safely so we accepted an induction on the Friday and had a sweep (at 39+1) and were booked in the following day at 2pm.

So, we spent the next morning getting everything organised and doing everything we could to get our natural oxytocin flowing - watching Moana on Disney, eating french toast with half a tub of Nutella 🍌 and I did a pregnancy yoga all about helping baby engage and move head down. It was actually also really nice to have that time to tidy the house and get everything perfect for when we got home (which was lovely when we came back home and we didn’t need to do anything) and so we headed off to the hospital.

My husband Danny and I had both done a hypnobirthing course together and were very on-board with getting the room all set up how we wanted it and this became a huge priority for me - especially because I was feeling upset that my birth couldn’t start ‘naturally’ at home like I’d always imagined! So after arriving and getting on the monitor and then having the first gel inserted we sprayed our room spray, put little fake candles everywhere, dimmed the lights and spent the next 2 hours playing monopoly deal, laughing and eating all our favourite treats!

I thought we would be in it for the long haul and really thought it could be all 3 gels before anything started to happen... and fully expected to have to have waters broken/ the drip and I think it was good for me to mentally accept that... but to keep things moving anyway I was squatting in the room, bouncing on my ball and staying in UFO positions! I didn’t really sit on the bed at all after the gel went in!

So about 3 hours after the gel went in I started to feel like my braxton hicks (which I had been having for weeks) were becoming stronger than normal but this excited me as I thought things could be happening!

We carried on playing games and watching our favourite films and just having fun until they started to come a lot more regularly and I was having to stop to breathe through them and we timed them on my phone. The timing app we used said that I was in established labour which I couldn't really believe as it had only been a few hours!

I was so nervous as we got nearer to 8pm as I thought my husband would have to leave and head home for the night (which is a 45 min drive away from the hospital) But a lovely midwife came in and could see things were happening! She explained the next step would be to see if I had dilated at all so that they could break my waters and as she was calmly explaining this my waters just went pop and went everywhere!!

I'm not going to lie here things really ramped up for me immediately and became very intense! I really lost my cool for the first few contractions and couldn't get a hang of my breathing at all but my husband was a life saver! He reminded me how important it was to get oxygen in to help my muscles and breathed with me as I got on all 4s over the bed! My waters just kept coming and coming and the midwife said she would move us straight to a proper birth suite!

The walk down the corridor was interesting to say the least 😂😂 I was pretty much naked and stopping to moo like a cow each time a contraction came on but the sense of relief I felt when we arrived at the room was immense! I felt like I could finally relax and get into a rhythm! My husband quickly got the room looking lovely and was on it with giving me sips of lucozade in the breaks between contractions!! (This was a game changer for me! A bottle with a straw and sooo much Lucozade sport!!) I breathed through the first few hours with my tens machine and Danny's help but I started to get some back to back contractions and really had a wobbler about whether I could do it.

Enter gas and air stage right 😂 which was amazing for me at this point! It helped me focus my breathing and I could carry on! I did panic whether or not I could do it as I was so sure that I was still hours and hours away and I kept saying to my husband if I'm not at 4cm on the next check I'm

having an epidural! But luckily they did a check and I was at the magic 4 and somehow this spurred me on as the midwife said things would move more quickly from there! I was finding it tough and asked for diamorphine which helped me so much! Although it didn't take away the pain it helped me to feel calm in the breaks and I even managed to nod off for about 30 seconds in between some contractions too which helped me reserve some energy for the pushing!

After a few times of the monitors slipping off due to me moving around so much they had to put a clip on Jack's head to make sure he was okay and it was at this point I started to say to everyone 'I really need a poo!!' The midwives got excited and told me I was 9 cm and to just go with my body!

Wow... pushing was INTENSE! But also incredible. It was amazing to finally feel like the pain was getting me somewhere and after about 90mins of pushing his head was finally crowning! It was surreal reaching down and feeling his little head of hair and it gave me the strength I needed to push and get his head out and his whole little body followed with the next contraction.

I can't even explain the relief when he was out and knowing he was okay. It was uncomfortable getting stitched up and to be honest I was in such a state of shock for the next hour or so that I don't think I really took much of it in! I had skin to skin and it was lovely but I couldn't really focus while I knew I still had to birth the placenta and get stitched so Danny had lovely skin to skin while I got sorted then they put him on me again and he latched on and I just burst into happy tears! Since then have been on cloud 9!

Just want to say to all the mummies about to meet their babies I am so excited for you! Literally the best thing ever, and to all of you who have done this - wow you're all superwomen! The level of respect I have for women's bodies now is just something else!

From Danny - "To the partners out there, your part in this birth is much bigger than you can imagine for making the experience positive and as comfortable as possible, make sure you take in as much of the course as possible. Top tips are: know the birth bags and where everything is; if you think you have enough snacks trust me you don't (I ate all the sweets in

the first hour 😂; talk to mum and keep her calm at all times reassuring her. Hypnobirthing was a game changer.”