

My Pregnancy Journey Diary (From here to Maternity) - Angelina Namiba

This *Week by week Pregnancy Journey Diary* was initially/originally published in the Positively Women magazine May/June issue of 1999. The organisation Positively Women later changed name and is now known as [Positively UK](#). They continue to provide excellent support and services to people living with HIV.

From Here to Maternity – Part 2

Weeks 22

The huge bra now fitted me perfectly and my bump was quite definite. I bought some maternity outfits and was grateful to all my friends who gave me a whole range of theirs.

My midwife had already given me my own hand-held notes and said I had to carry them everywhere. Even when out shopping. How did she know? 😊

Week 23

I was showing a lot now. I had not been offered a seat on a train or bus yet! I went out for a dance and quite exhausted myself. Dancing was the only form of exercise I seemed to be doing, so although I was tired, it felt good. I still had not gone for a swim.

Week 24/25

Three more months to go and the time seemed to be flying by. I got my Maternity Certificate and handed in my leave request at work. It still felt unreal.

Week 26

I went out to a party organised by a friend and got into some dancing. By noon the next day I had not felt the baby move. I panicked and phoned the Labour Ward at the hospital who advised me to drink some ice cold water as this would stimulate the baby. They said that if I had not felt anything in an hour, I was to go to the ward immediately, with my notes.

After an hour, I still had not felt anything and was starting to become really worried. I cried a lot and had all kinds of thoughts running through my mind. Typically, I did not have my notes with me so I left work and went home. A friend gave me a lift. I then got my notes and took the train to the hospital. It felt like the longest journey I have ever taken.

They were expecting me at the ward. A student nurse checked for the baby's heartbeat and could not locate it! The midwife then came and tried. By this time, of course, I was bawling my eyes out.

He then said that he was picking up sounds which felt like kicks and that the reason they were having problems locating the baby's heart beat was because my pulse was racing. (Can you blame me?) The monitor was therefore picking up my heart beat and not the baby's.

They then went off and got the doctor who came round with a portable scan and another midwife. I was so worried by now. I can't even begin to explain my feelings other than to say that they were a mixture of anxiety, fear, self pity, stress and extreme sadness.

Luckily, we did manage to see the baby moving around on the scan. The relief I felt was indescribable!...I thanked God so much.

Week 27

I still had not been offered a seat on a train or bus. Friends had started to give me baby stuff. It all seemed so unreal but I have to admit that it was very exciting.

I felt quite big now although 'those in the know', kept on saying that I was too small for six and a half months! Oh well!...I was starting to get curious about the baby's sex. Everyone was saying that it was going to be a boy. This, they claimed, was due to the shape of my bump. I was not really bothered about the sex as long as the baby was ok.

I was starting to get really tired now and it was hard to find a good position to sleep in. I was also given dates for parentcraft classes.

Week 28

My Goddaughter was being christened in Germany so I booked my flight to attend. I was really looking forward to it as I knew it would be my last holiday in a long time. I'm normally a very disorganized traveller and leave everything until the last minute, but this time, for some reason, I was completely packed and ready two whole days before.

Little did I know that there would be another scare; two episodes of light bleeding on Thursday evening. I was due to travel on the Saturday. I phoned the hospital who told me to pack an overnight bag and to come straight in.

So, there I was on Friday morning in the Labour Ward again!!! They monitored me and said they would keep me for 24 hours observation and would only let me go home if the bleeding had stopped. If I did bleed some more, they might have to get the baby out!

I was still in the hospital 24 hours later. There was no further bleeding but I was strongly advised not to fly, so I had to cancel my holiday. I was disappointed of course, but I was also relieved that things were still relatively ok with the baby. My consultant then came and saw

me and made the decision to start me on AZT immediately. He had been planning to start me on it in a few weeks' time.

I had heard loads of bad thing about AZT but I said to myself, 'this is supposed to help me and my baby. It's a good thing.' So I took it in a positive light. I eve convinced myself that I was not going to have any side effects, and I didn't.

Week 30

I had finally overstretched my last G-strings so I decided to go and get some decent maternity knickers from Mothercare. When I asked the assistant if she had any sexy maternity undies, she looked at me like I was mad! I won't even try and describe the bloomers I did finally buy! Let's just say that as soon as baby popped out, it would be back to the G-strings!

Week 31-33

I was getting even more tired by now. These few weeks flew by, probably because I was trying to wind thing sup at work. I got my final bits of shopping. I never realised that such a little person could need so much. I do distinctly remember having terrible back-ache.

Week 34

I went for my first Parentcraft class. They covered labour pains. I wasn't planning to have any of those (I had a planned C-section booked). They also covered pain relief during this time. If I did go into early labour, God forbid, then I wanted all the pain relieving drugs that they could realistically pump into me.

My last day at work finally arrived and my colleagues had organised a baby shower for me. I got loads of useful stuff fir the expected sprog. Very handy as it meant less shopping for me. By now shopping had become more of a chore than anything else. The presents were also great because I was going to be unemployed for a while. It was also a great excuse for a get-together with colleagues...