

### **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 July/August 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 3**

#### **Week 35**

The first week of the rest of my maternity leave. I could now organize my life around getting up, bathing, eating, sleeping and watching telly. Bliss!

I decided to get cable TV installed seeing as there was going to be a lot of telly watching time! On Friday evening I went to a Volunteer Appreciating Evening at work. I enjoyed myself as there was plenty to eat and, of course, it was nice to see everybody again. I wondered if I might be getting work-withdrawal symptoms already! I felt simply huge by now and had terrible back ache.

#### **Week 36**

I couldn't even walk to the bus-stop without stopping every few minutes. The days seem to be dragging now. The novelty of living life like a lady of leisure was fast wearing off.

#### **Week 37**

I wondered if the baby's head was engaged as I felt a lot more comfortable than usual, and more to the point, I could eat a lot more. I was now starting to get quite anxious about the new arrival, call it 'mixed emotions'.

I had a few friends over for a Baby Shower, again! A wild time was had by all. I've got the pictures to prove it! At least my anxiety took a back seat that day.

One more week to go before D-Day! I had decided, from the beginning, to have an elective caesarean section – and they usually perform these at around 38 weeks.<sup>1</sup>

#### **Week 38**

The count-down had begun. I was due to go into hospital on Sunday. On the Saturday I decided I should pack a bag. I felt I had put it off long enough. On the Sunday morning I was in Church for the first service. I prayed really hard, harder than usual. (Yes, I go to church!). I went into hospital in the evening.

On the Monday morning they came and took me to the pre-theatre room. I had decided to have two people in the room with me; the baby's Godmother and a good friend (the one

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<sup>1</sup>Current [BHIVA guidance on the management of HIV in Pregnancy](#) guidelines now recommend vaginal delivery for all women living with HIV. Caesarean sections are recommended for when there is an emergency, similar to guidelines for women not living with HIV.

who lent me the huge bras). I had an [epidural](#) as I wanted to see the baby as soon as she was born.

Before going into theatre, they started monitoring me. I was so nervous! I was getting contractions almost every five minutes, or so it seemed. I almost chickened out and thought very seriously about having a normal delivery. I cannot remember the number of times I went to the loo in about ten minutes.

Then, to make matters worse, the operation was delayed by two whole hours. I was not amused. It had been scheduled for 2pm but I did not have it until about 4.40pm.

Anyway, they finally got me into theatre. My two birth partners had to dress up in surgeon's scrubs?? (I think that is what they call them on ER). The epidural was then administered. It was not as bad as I had been led to believe. The actual operation felt as if someone was rummaging around in my insides.

Within a matter of minutes, at 4.50 to be precise, my baby girl was born! I heard her cry! They quickly showed her to me and took her away to be cleaned up. I cannot describe that moment, so I will not even try.

The one thing I do remember clearly was thanking God for giving me such a beautiful baby. Even at that early stage she looked gorgeous! I do not care what anyone says. When I looked down into her tiny face, I realised that this was worth all those rough times during the pregnancy.

So, it is on to the next stage now. They tell me life is now going to consist of nappies, feeds, cries, sleepless nights, etc. But then again, that is another story, isn't it?

#### **Some of the things I enjoyed about being pregnant.**

Feeling the baby move inside me. It is an awesome experience!

People being genuinely nice to me.

#### **Some of the things I did not enjoy about being pregnant.**

Now being able to wear sexy undies.

Not being able to have a drink on the bus or train without having first to plan, with military precision, where the nearest loo is!

Second image below: A few moments after Baby Malika was born. Umbilical cord still attached.



my First Photo

