Marisa Cohen - After Birth

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IN THIS EPISODE

Marisa Cohen returns to join Dr. Elliot Berlin, DC and tell how her first baby's birth actually unfolded. After a pandemic pregnancy spent changing plans and providers — a low placenta, a planned hospital cesarean, a placenta that moved, gestational diabetes concerns and a late switch to midwives at 36 weeks — Marisa settled at last on a home birth. She and Dr. Elliot Berlin, DC talk through a frightening false alarm in the final weeks, the spicy-food-and-acupuncture campaign to get labor started, a labor that moved faster than anyone expected, the washcloth trick that got her through surges in the tub, pushing, delivering the placenta, and the intoxicating high of the first days of new motherhood.

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DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Welcome to the informed pregnancy and parenting podcast I'm your host after Ellie Berlin after experiencing her entire pregnancy during the pandemic of 2020 ish And having to change birth plans and health providers several times My guest today returns to the podcast to discuss the birth of her first child Last time we talked she had just literally changed her birth plan again Deciding once and for all to do a home birth here. She is to discuss how it all unfolded Marissa Cohen, welcome to the podcast. Thank you. Thanks for having me I mean the one thing I know that I can count on at this point is that you're not going to change your birth plan again

MARISA COHEN: I think we're pretty set on what we on what what's going to happen because

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yes, because all right. So just to recap you were Thinking of having an out-of-hospital birth and then all of a sudden they were like your placenta is too low And then you're like, oh I have to have a su section. So i'll do that at the hospital That's never fun at home. And then you were there and then your placenta moved up

MARISA COHEN: Yes, as they do

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: As they sometimes do oftentimes and so you're eligible again for a vaginal birth and but you're like, uh, i'm already here And then you considered going back out of hospital and then what happened you had some blood sugar concerns

MARISA COHEN: Yeah, the gestational diabetes was one of the factors and um, I thought maybe thought it was a bigger deal than it was And then I kind of liked the ob that I was seeing at the time. I was like this person I like her so, you know, we'll stay the course But yeah, then in january or maybe december covid was getting really crazy in in la and I was feeling Less comfortable about being in a hospital period

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, the numbers here were spiking like crazy like one in four people Were testing positive for covid and it was spiking beyond that. I think probably all the who knows speculation but probably all the gatherings from uh, Thanksgiving and other december holidays and And you know people got a little careless and boom it just lit up So at the last minute you decided to switch to a midwife Yes different than the midwives you had been talking to all the way the beginning of the pregnancy

MARISA COHEN: Yeah, we I think spoke for the first time on christmas eve Which I was like 36 and a half weeks and at 37 weeks We sort of made the decision to switch and I was a week late So I had four weeks of visits with them. So four consecutive visits with my midwife team before the big event

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: No, it's uh Not no time. I mean I had somebody switch during the pandemic who had four days. So

MARISA COHEN: All right. Yeah, I felt like I got to know them well enough And if I didn't then we definitely got to know each other well enough during the birth

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: oh well, yeah, so that's not also a lot of time to like get everything in place for a home birth because You have to get stuff

MARISA COHEN: Yeah, there was a lot of I guess luck at they're just like things working out at the end of this pregnancy because they're um I guess they had a client or a patient that was planning on doing a home birth and For some reason had to deliver in a hospital and so she gave them her birth kit and so they gave the birth kit to me So they like had one of those uh birth kits on hand that oh, that's randomly lucky Yeah, they really just hooked me up. So

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wonderful. Did you have to do anything to get your mind ready for the switch out of hospital back to home?

MARISA COHEN: No, I think actually like when When we made the decision, my husband and I had to switch, and he sort of came around because he was, I think, a little bit more nervous about it than I was. I felt calmer instantly, and he said that there seemed like there was a shift in my attitude and my anxiety level. He's like, you just seem like you centered and calmed down. So I think that that was maybe a cue that it was a good choice for me, was that I felt instantly better. I was feeling a lot of anxiety about giving birth and about going to a hospital, and the second we switched to a home birth, I was just like, ah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And how was it for him?

MARISA COHEN: I mean, he was part or two went over. Yeah, I think he says he was nervous the whole time, you know, even while I was in labor, but he hit it well. And I think what he says is he made the decision that, like, you know, my comfort in that situation he was going to put before his and trust the process. And he met with the midwife team that attended the birth and felt really comfortable with them. And so I think he was just like, I'm going to go with it. And so, yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Well, that's a swell, upstanding guy making me feel bad about myself.

MARISA COHEN: Thank you. I appreciated the support. So if he was feeling nervous about it, he didn't let on.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: That's really great. And in terms of your last few weeks of pregnancy, how were you feeling physically?

MARISA COHEN: I was feeling like a little bit more tired. I had been, you know, like working out and going on long walks, you know, all throughout the pregnancy. And the last few weeks, I was not interested in doing that. I was feeling just like a little bit more just big in my body and sort of slow. And it was harder to move around, but I was still feeling good. I had like a good appetite and I wasn't feeling super anxious about giving birth. So the last few weeks were, we're pretty good.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Were you just resting more?

MARISA COHEN: Yeah, I was resting more. I was trying to just like take more naps. And I worked up until about a week before I gave birth. And so that was kind of a good thing to keep my mind off of things. But, um, Wow.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: But because you said you gave birth a week past your due date. So that means you worked right up to your due date.

MARISA COHEN: Yeah. Yeah. I had a feeling that I was going to be late. And so I was like, I think I'll have like a little bit of breathing room, but yeah,

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: some good bonding time with your partner.

MARISA COHEN: Um, well he was still working. So it was really mostly good bonding time with the dog and with my naps, um, cause I had to say goodbye to those, you know, once the little guy got here naps. Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, not the dog.

MARISA COHEN: Yeah, the dog stayed.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: All right. So were there any moments in the last couple of weeks where you thought things might be kicking in? Did you have like surges? Did you start losing plug or anything like that?

MARISA COHEN: So I was due on the 16th and nothing happened on the 16th and I wasn't expecting it on the 17th. I all of a sudden got this like crazy stabbing pain on my right side from like hip to rib cage. And I was like, Oh my God, this is the beginning of labor. And it's only on one side of my abdomen, which seems weird, but whatever, this must be it. And it was really, really intense and it didn't stop. And I thought that that was odd because my doula had prepped me that, you know, like a surge or contraction can be intense, but wasn't getting a break. And that went on for, you know, about maybe like two hours. And this was just like this, like really intense pain. And I talked to my doula and she was like, you know, this

MARISA COHEN: might not be labor because we all called the midwives. We're like, guys, we're in labor. We're in labor. And they were like, you know, midwives are pretty calm. They're like, okay, you know, let us know how it goes. We'll see you in a little bit, maybe. But the doula that we were working with, Nina, who's wonderful, was like, I think that the baby's maybe just trying to reposition, try going into like a modified child's pose with like your bum up in the air. And instantly like that pain went away. And I fell asleep in that position for a few hours.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, wow.

MARISA COHEN: Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You slept like a child. After that.

MARISA COHEN: Yes, exactly. But after that, I was really nervous about giving birth because I was like, oh, this is going to hurt. This is going to be a lot more painful than I anticipated. And I was really scared.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, really?

MARISA COHEN: For the first time. Yeah, that was like a shift because prior to that, I was just like, this is going to be great. I'm going to just keep my attitude positive and whatever this is, I can handle it. And then after that, I was just like, Oh God, it's coming for me. And when it, when is it going to happen? And I was just really on edge.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So, I mean, when you felt that happening, were there things that helped you with the intensity?

MARISA COHEN: No, I tried taking a shower. I got in the tub. I was doing breathing exercises and nothing seemed to like, you know, take it down and it wasn't like a wave where it was like building. And then it was at a peak and then it was sort of weaning down. It was just like constant, you know, like 10 out of 10 pain. And I was just like, I don't know what to do with this. So, yeah. And it was only on one side, but it was funny just getting into a position like, or maybe he stopped moving, but that seemed to instantly like in within like two minutes, the pain subsided.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: That's pretty cool, and that's that's what your Dula Nina and just talking you over the phone

MARISA COHEN: Yeah, actually like her talking to my husband and him coaching me, but that I mean dual is our magic

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: They are just wonderful. Yeah, and she's got so much experience and so much intuition It's cool that she could tell what was going just by talking to your husband talking to you Right, so when did things actually pick up and well I guess before to that is there anything that you did now that you were feeling anxious about the intensity to help calm yourself down

MARISA COHEN: Well, I was like really nervous and like I felt tense in my body and I was like this isn't gonna work Because I have to be like I want to feel open and relaxed like I feel like labor is not gonna start if I'm super fearful and shut down and so on the 20th I saw my midwife and she offered to do a Membrane sweep they weren't actually able to do a membrane sweep because I wasn't dilated at all but they used borage oil and did like a vigorous cervical exam and Then the next day I got acupuncture

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Well, it's very spicy. I was just saying you can cross that off your bucket list now the borage oil super vigorous pelvic exam check

MARISA COHEN: Yes. Yes, exactly. I can cross that off my bucket But that I think made things like a little crampy and then like the next day still nothing was happening and then I went and saw My acupuncturist and she put some points in my hands and my ankles and then stimulated them with like These little tiny jumper cables. Yeah Mm-hmm, and she's like this usually gets people going. I had some like extremely spicy lamb vindaloo Our favorite Indian food restaurant We did a few other things to try to get things going on the 21st and by midnight that night I was in labor something worked

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, one of the some we threw a lot of stuff against the wall something stuck or maybe just decided it was time But wouldn't that be interesting? I guess it doesn't really matter what word but it sounds like you were ready to roll

MARISA COHEN: Yeah

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Mentally, I mean there's the reason why you were doing all these because you're only three days past your due date, right then

MARISA COHEN: Yeah, let's see I ended up going six days past my due date, but I was just nervous I think something about that like event happening on the 17th just changed my whole mindset from like everything's gonna be fine and happy when it happens to Super fearful and super shut down and I was like I can't imagine Like naturally going into labor being this scared and tense And so I was like I got to do extra stuff to like compensate for that feeling

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: But it's interesting you're always so mellow no matter what's going on. I can't even picture you being scared intense

MARISA COHEN: I know and that and it was like very different from how I'd felt the entire pregnancy every test every doctor's visit every Shift I was like pretty calm and pretty confident that everything would be fine And so it was like an uncomfortable place to be like just being scared

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: All right, let's take a little break and when we come back, we'll find out how this labor ball got rolling We'll be right back Pregnancy Podcast. We're talking to Marissa Cohen and after a false alarm that scared the bejesus out of you, you decided to do 25 tricks to get your

labor started and your labor started. How did it start? I think that it had

MARISA COHEN: been in early labor throughout the day because I was feeling a little crampy, but I was like, I don't know what that is about. But by midnight, we went to bed around 11, but I wasn't feeling great. And then by midnight, I was like, oh, something's happening. And I was having really sort of intense menstrual cramps in my low abdomen. And they were maybe spaced out maybe 20 minutes or 15 minutes, 12 minutes apart. And then they started to come on like pretty quickly. And by 3am, so by three hours later, the surges were maybe four minutes apart. And again, doulas are so wonderful. Nina came over at three in the morning just to be with us, which is very kind. Maybe she likes Indian food. Maybe. And I know that's, you know, like

MARISA COHEN: what doulas do, but it was just like, you know, she came over just to sort of help walk me around the house and breathe with me and keep my husband like calm. So that was amazing. But you know, the surges were kind of like coming in wave after wave. Sometimes there wouldn't really be a break between them. And so she and I were both like, kind of like, we're not sure how far along how much I progressed. But by 7am, she was like, do you want me to call the midwife and see if she can come over and check you just so you know how far along you are. And I was expecting maybe to be like two or three centimeters dilated. But when she came and checked me, I was seven centimeters that barrage

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: oil really, it's the spot during this time, because I know that everyone feels a different neighborhood experiences a differently and you may not be totally recollective. But do you remember when your surges were coming, like what's going through your mind and what it feels like in your body? And I said period cramps around your belly. So first of all, does that mean you didn't have back labor? You didn't really feel in your back too

MARISA COHEN: much? I didn't feel it in my back at all. I don't know if that's like his position. Or maybe we can credit you with

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: that. Sure, I'll take a credit where I can get a credit. Because we did so much good work on the back before. I did

MARISA COHEN: a lot of work on you. Yeah. But no back labor. There were points where it was honestly really painful. But I think just like they were just intense surges. And I think I progressed pretty quickly. And I think that's because like the surges were really intense. And so yeah, they were productive. Very productive. Yeah. But I don't remember what was going through my mind as much during the surges. But I remember like when I wasn't in a surge, my head would go somewhere else. Like it was like almost like I was meditating. But instead of like, hearing some peaceful calm thing, like a jingle of like an accident lawyer kept going through.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Were there physical things that you found helpful? Either people touching you or squeezing things or massaging or or did you want to not really be touched?

MARISA COHEN: Breathing was really helpful. Like the breathing techniques I'd worked on with my doula and having someone in I was in the bathtub for a while having someone in there breathing with me and sort of just keeping me company. But the thing that I loved the most was I put a wet washcloth down at the edge of the bathtub. And I put my forehead on it. And I was just rolling my

forehead back and forth. It was sort of like a scalp massage. And it felt really nice just to like have like it was a kind of like firm pressure rolling back and forth on my head. And that felt great.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Possibly could be enhanced with essential oils. And so the fear that was created by the false alarm, did that go away pretty quick? Did you see that? Well, this is kind of different and more tolerable than that was?

MARISA COHEN: Yeah. And once I was in it, there was like adrenaline was pumping. And I don't want to say that I was like excited, but I was like, we're doing this, this is happening. And like, you know, like, it's not like I'm dreading the unknown, like I'm in it. So the fear was gone.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Before your midwife came, what role did your doula play versus your husband?

MARISA COHEN: Well, my husband was there like kind of like keeping me company, checking in on me. Sometimes I wanted to be alone. Sometimes I wanted company. He was very militant that I drink water after every surge because they were really, they wanted me to stay hydrated. And then my doula maybe pushed me a little further. Not even, I wouldn't even say pushed me, but she's like, you know, I, I wanted to just stay in the tub and like roll my head back and forth on the washcloth forever. And she's like, let's get up and walk around and then you can get back in the tub if you want to. But she's like, I want you to like, you know, be mobile and get the baby out. So she may be like pushed me a little bit further to like leave that

MARISA COHEN: comfortable, comfortable place.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. Did your surges feel different on land?

MARISA COHEN: Yeah, they were much more intense. I think you had called it like a waterdural or aqua dural. Yes. Uh huh. Yeah. The tub, it was definitely much more gentle than things were when I was out of the tub.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Did they ever get to a point where you thought, I don't know if I can do this.

MARISA COHEN: Oh, yeah. So the midwives were there for a while and I was, I was at seven centimeters and I was in the tub, maybe by myself for a little while. And I was like, I don't think I can do this anymore. And they came in and they were like, why don't you get out of the tub for a little while and we'll check you and see if you've progressed from seven centimeters. And I was like, all right, I'm going to, whatever I'm at, I'm going to tell them that we need to go to the hospital and I need to get an epidural. This is far too much for me to handle. I can't do this.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Is that because they got more intense or closer together or you're wearing down without sleep? What, what do you

MARISA COHEN: probably a lot of it, like a lot of those things, they were closer together, they were getting stronger, they were strong from the beginning. And so I think I was just kind of feeling like fatigue, but also I was just like, I'm not comfortable. I don't want to do this anymore. I think if I'd been in a hospital, I would have been like, let's get an epidural, it would have been too tempting not to

because they can be really intense.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, it's like juicing and then walking into a fried chicken joint.

MARISA COHEN: Yeah, it's hard to say no to that sort of drinking celery in here. Yeah. So I was like, I'm going to put on some pants, get in the car and we're going to the hospital. But they checked me and they were like, you're pretty much at 10 centimeters. So start pushing and I was like, Oh, so we're not going to go to Cedars.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: No. Was it exciting, though? Like, oh, cool. I mean, oftentimes, it just gives you like that burst of energy that you need to be like, okay, let's finish this off.

MARISA COHEN: Yeah, I was I think I was like proud of my body. I was like, Oh, wow, I really like, you know, I thought that I was gonna get stalled out or that I was gonna like progress really slowly because it was my first time in labor. I'm a first time mom, but I was proud that I like, without really much effort, you know, from my like conscious brain was able to, you know, in 12 hours go from like, you know, pretty much nothing to fully dilated.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I don't want to put words in it, but it sounds like what you're saying is like you were almost an observer. And your body did this for you.

MARISA COHEN: Definitely. And that was some of the best advice that I got from my doula and other moms who have birthed without the support of an epidural was to like, leave your thinking brain behind and just like trust your body to do it and like your body and the baby have been doing this the whole time. And like, they're going to take it there. You don't need to think your way through this. So I tried to turn my brain off as much as possible. Was

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: you're crafting a way to get an epidural. So at that point, were you ready to start pushing?

MARISA COHEN: No, I kind of wanted to stay in the tub. I would have stayed in the tub for a year.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Could you not push on the tub?

MARISA COHEN: I think I maybe could have but they wanted to get me out of the tub for a little while because I think when I got in the tub, the contractions spaced out, slowed down. And I think they were like, let's get this party started. So we were pushing. Yeah, I pushed for two hours in bed and then was feeling pretty fatigued. And so they were like, why don't you like get back in the tub, take a break, maybe for like, you know, 2030 40 minutes, and then we'll try pushing again.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You glossed over pushing for two hours in bed as if it was just like, Oh, yeah, I did that. I mean, okay, everyone feels it differently. Did pushing feel productive to you? Were you excited to be pushing? Was it more intense, less intense?

MARISA COHEN: I was getting pretty tired by the time we got to the pushing. And it's like a muscle that like I'd never used before. I felt like I'd never like it was like a feeling I didn't know how to access that like feeling. And you know, when you're like at a workout class or something and someone comes and like corrects your form and they like pull your shoulders back or like tuck your pelvis in

and you're like, Oh, that's how it's supposed to be. One of my midwives, with permission, she's like, I'm going to put my fingers inside of you. And you're going to feel them here and I want you to push into my fingers. And that gave me like enough guidance to understand like how push better. So I don't know if anyone else has had that experience. Oh yeah,

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I've seen them before. How deep into your two hours was that? That was like

MARISA COHEN: towards the end of it. Things that could have been helpful an hour and a half ago. Yeah, but yeah, so I took a break and then I came back out maybe around maybe around 2 p.m. and this is the part I remember the best. I don't really remember that first two hours of pushing very well, but this part you know I pushed and again like the midwives that attended my birth were so wonderful and observant because one of them was like I noticed that you get the best pushes on like push two and three so like you know like try to use those two that first one you don't really like get a lot but like you're making a lot of progress on two and three it's really focused on those like I felt like they were really really honed in on exactly what was

MARISA COHEN: going on with me and able to give me like really good guidance which

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: was great. It's wonderful and during this time did you know two hours went by? No,

MARISA COHEN: I was told two hours went by. It could have been five minutes or a year. Your brain goes to like the time means like I don't know it doesn't mean as much when you're in this experience. Yeah, I mean even as

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: just a helper out at birth sometimes it feels like you're in a casino you know especially the longer the sun comes up it goes down and comes up again yeah yeah no clocks. I actually was at a birth a little while ago now and the midwife put a little sign on all the clocks that said the time is now. That's nice. I was like I really need to know what time it is. I've got stuff to do. Yeah, all right well let's take another little break and find out how this ends off and how early motherhood is. We will be right back. Welcome back to the Informed Pregnancy podcast. We're talking to Marissa Cohen and after nearly threatening everybody that you were gonna put on pants and get in the car

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: you found out you were at 10 centimeters so you pushed for quite a while. One question that always goes through my mind when you started pushing did you feel like pushing or were they just like now's a good time

MARISA COHEN: to push? Yeah, I think they were like now's a good time to push and I was like really leaning on them for guidance at this point because I hadn't slept and I hadn't eaten. I kept like I kept... I know you were drinking like crazy because of the husband. Yes, I was drinking a lot of water but I was refusing food. They kept trying to get me to eat like something with protein in it like some yogurt or like peanut butter and I was like get away from me with like you know the thought of eating peanut butter and labor was so off-putting. Nausea? Just like you know like just no appetite and like my mouth was kind of dry and so like I ended up having to eat some peanut butter. Naomi, one of my midwives, gave me some tough

MARISA COHEN: love and she's like eat this peanut butter and she's like you need to have something because of the gestational diabetes. So yeah. When you hopped in

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: the tub after your two hours of pushing but then a little guidance that made you a little more clear on where to push. You got to go back to your happy place in the tub. What happened in there? A lot of rolling

MARISA COHEN: head back and forth on a washcloth and things just like slowing down and I was like this is where I need to be and I think I just mentally needed a little bit of a break because I felt like I think in those two hours I was pushing but I either wasn't making any progress or I wasn't making any lasting progress because he would kind of like inch his way down and then inches way back up and then he'd inches way down and inches way back up and it was frustrating because you know I felt like okay I'm doing some work to get him down but you know it was just sort of like in and out. How do you start making progress? The second round of pushing I was pushing a little bit

MARISA COHEN: harder and... Is this in the water or back on land? Back on land back in bed and they were keeping an eye on his heart tones with a Doppler so I would be on my back and then one side and then the other side and one of the sides his heart rate would drop a little bit too low for their comfort and so they were like okay we got to push you we got to change your position up so they were sort of like really keeping a good eye on that but I wasn't worried about it but I was like all right we got to get this like this has got to end we got to get this baby out of here so I think I was a little bit more motivated to just like push through whatever it was and really give it all my effort. Unmedicated pushing when you know you say he inched up

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: an inch down that seems like a lot of pressure on your perineum. Did you feel

MARISA COHEN: that? Yeah you feel everything. And I think maybe some of it's by design that they sort of inch down and inch up because, you know, that helps sort of stretch things out and avoid tearing instead of things, something just like coming out, like a freight train sort of just like, you know, making space for himself, but yes, I felt all of it. And so I could feel him kind of coming down a little bit and I was like, Oh, he must be really close to be out. And then I would feel him sort of scoop back up.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And I was just kidding. When you finally pushed him out, how long had it been in

MARISA COHEN: that second round of pushing another two hours? So it was around four PM that his head came out. And I remember thinking on that contraction, I was getting like four or five good pushes out of each contraction. And I remember feeling on that one, I was like, I don't think I have anything left in me and I just have to like, gave it everything on this one because I don't know if I can do another contraction and you did it. Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And, and out he came. Was there a sensation with his head coming through?

MARISA COHEN: It hurt and it felt like, you know, like being like ripped in half, but I didn't really tear at all. So I think it just was like, maybe just some extreme stretching, but it definitely felt like it was

early labor or in, in labor. I was like, Oh, early labor would have been more comfortable in this during pushing, I was like, Oh, active labor labor would have been much more comfortable in this. And then when he crowned, I was like, I would go back to the pushing.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: But was that like, just a moment in time or did it last for a while?

MARISA COHEN: No, it was a moment in time. As soon as it was over, his head was out. We had to wait till the next contraction to get his like shoulders and the rest of his body out. But as soon as his head came out, I felt instantly better. And then once he was out completely, I was just like, Hey guys, what's up? Like, it was all of a sudden back to feeling completely normal.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I always talk about that moment when it's just like, you've done it and it's behind you and you realize that you're okay. The baby's okay. The whole journey is over. This is how it ends. And it's like all the color comes back into all the life comes back into you, it's just like literally watching you come back into your body and it's just, yeah, I always feel like if I could get a crystal ball and show you that's going to happen at this time, you know, we'd just sit around watching Netflix or Hulu, whatever you prefer. It's such an incredible moment. It's such an incredible moment. That one moment. I just want to make a compilation video of that moment of the minute leading up to that moment and that moment. So powerful.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: How is the afterbirth for you delivering placenta and things like that?

MARISA COHEN: Well, when he first came out, the cord was around his neck. I think that's why he was kind of like having, he wasn't crying and he was a little like, I didn't see him. My husband said that he was kind of purpley, which maybe all babies are purple when they come out, but I think he was a little bit freaked out. And he said that the midwife just sort of like expertly, like gently guided the umbilical cord over his head and like, you know, would act a very nonchalant about it, but they gave him to me and then we waited a while to cut the cord delivering. The placenta was pretty difficult. I was pushing and it wasn't coming out. They were kind of trying to help me by like tugging on it and it wasn't coming out.

MARISA COHEN: And I was just like, look guys, like, I don't think this is going to come out. I think this stuck. So I think we just have to leave it in there. No, again, Naomi, who was, was one of my midwives, who was just wonderful, um, gave me like a nice dose of tough love. And she said that it had been an hour and at an hour, she has to take me to the hospital. So I needed to try to push the placenta out now, otherwise she was taking me to the hospital and I was like, all right, fine. Challenge accepted. Like fine. Uh, I was convinced it was still attached to my uterus, but they kind of like, you know, I was like, I don't know what to do. I was convinced it was still attached to my uterus, but they

MARISA COHEN: kind of like helped me like get it out and pulled a little bit on the umbilical cord and it eventually came out.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Are you eating it?

MARISA COHEN: Uh, I had it made into, yeah, pills. I didn't eat it straight away, but Nina, my wonderful doula made it into some capsules. So I've been taking it.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Is your husband going to eat it?

MARISA COHEN: Um, I could offer it to him. I don't know. Does it have a benefit to?

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: No, I have no idea. Sometimes people are curious. I want to like take a plus on the pill and wash it down with some of your milk. I could give them a few, uh, it could be a new ritual. Let me start. Yeah. How has, I mean, I'm going to call it postpartum, which sometimes has a connotation on it as always being negative, but I just mean the period of postpartum. How has the after birth been for you physically and emotionally and you know, new motherhood?

MARISA COHEN: I mean, it was like, especially like the first few days after birth. I was like on an intoxicating high, like I had so much energy. I didn't need to sleep. I just wanted to stare at him all the time. And I mean, I still do. He's adorable, but it was like for however difficult birth was. It was this like lasting, like amazing high. And you know, there've been some challenges, like, especially physically. I felt like when I was pregnant, my body was working perfectly. everything was happening as it was supposed to. And postpartum has been more like rashes and night sweats and mastitis. And so there's just been like more physical ailments than I was expecting. I was maybe prepared. I was like, okay,

MARISA COHEN: so like there might be some postpartum depression or anxiety, but I was not prepared for the mastitis. So. Nobody really talks about that ahead of time. I don't know why.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: No one wants to be about clogged milk bucks. No one. Yeah. Well, we should do an episode on that. There's a like, I think a top 10 things that nobody ever tells you about or rarely talks about. And we should probably do that. So emotionally, you're feeling good.

MARISA COHEN: Emotionally, I'm feeling good. It's like my husband and I kind of like joke that we fight about who gets to take care of him. Like I want to give him a bath tonight. And you know, I want to change his diaper. I'm just kidding. My husband does most of the diapers.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: If only you had twins.

MARISA COHEN: Yeah, exactly.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Everybody could have one.

MARISA COHEN: Maybe next time.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, I like that you're talking about next time. So for a person whose plan changed so many times, back, forth and yonder, are you happy with the way it ended up? Is there things you would do differently next time?

MARISA COHEN: I mean, next time I would just go with, you know, straight away with the home birth and with midwifery care. I felt so cared for. And like everyone who attended my birth, which was just two midwives and my doula and my partner, but everyone was just so supportive and felt very focused on me and brought like great energy to the experience. I can't imagine experiencing it any differently. So I think, yeah, the only thing I would do differently next time is I wouldn't beat around the bush with so many different options. Just go for the gold. Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Any final thoughts, anything from your story that I didn't pick up on?

MARISA COHEN: No, I mean, I feel like, again, really lucky. I feel lucky with the doula that I ended up working with Nina's just like beyond amazing. She came over for visits afterwards, brought me cookies that help support lactation and sat and chat with me. And the midwives that attended my birth, Naomi and Lilit were also just like amazing. And I sort of fell into all of these things. Like, you know, you recommended Naomi on Christmas Eve and we, you know, they had availability. It was like, you know, it all happened so quickly. So yeah, sometimes you really like can't plan the way that things turn out, but it still turns out really well.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: It couldn't happen to an easier person. And I guess I do have one other question. Now that things went the way they did, is your husband more comfortable with the home birth as planning for the future?

MARISA COHEN: Oh man, you should hear him telling, he has a good friend whose wife is pregnant. They live in Sweden, but they I think have been considering a home birth and they might be moving to a home birth. And I heard him on the phone the other morning, just like, it's amazing. You got to do it. So now he's talking his friends into it.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay, you've converted him.

MARISA COHEN: Yeah, he's pretty happy with the experience too.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wonderful. I know your midwives very well, Naomi and Lilette. They've actually both been on the podcast and Nina is on the podcast fairly frequently, but they're amazing. Just wonderful, wonderful people, great at what they do. And as much as you were lucky to work with them, you're also an amazing person and all of us are just super lucky to work with you.

MARISA COHEN: Thank you for your advice and for connecting me with Naomi because it was really just a huge blessing.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Well, it's my Christmas present.

MARISA COHEN: Thank you.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You're welcome. All right, I look forward to seeing you soon for some new Momma TLC. And I appreciate that you came here to share your story at home. Thanks for listening to the Informed Pregnancy podcast. If you would like more pregnancy and parenting information, you can find us on Instagram at Dr. Berlin. Spelled out D-O-C-T-O-R-B-E-R-L-I-N.

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