Alessandra Torresani - After Birth

Episode 297 · August 18, 2022 · with Alessandra Torresani

IN THIS EPISODE

Alessandra Torresani returns to join Dr. Elliot Berlin, DC one week after the birth of her first baby to tell the after-birth half of her story. When we last heard from her, she was nearing her due date with a birth plan she loved and a doctor she adored — the fabulous Dr. Jay Goldberg. Just days before her daughter was due, that plan changed drastically when word came that Dr. Goldberg had suddenly passed away, and Alessandra — a self-described planner who takes a long time to trust a doctor — had to pivot at the very end of her pregnancy and learn to trust a new doctor in his practice. In this episode she remembers Dr. Goldberg, his humor and his calm, and their last conversation, then picks up the story on her due date itself: out to lunch feeling full of energy, the first unfamiliar cramps that night, losing her mucus plug the next morning, and getting her nails done while timing contractions. From there it is a last favorite meal at home as the contractions jump from six minutes apart to three — and suddenly move from her front to 100% in her back — and a 22-minute race to the hospital past police cars and a street closure, arriving unable to sit and refusing a wheelchair, with contractions coming every minute and a half.

About this transcript: *This transcript was created with AI-assisted transcription and reviewed by our team. It may not be 100% accurate — names, medical terms, and phrasing can occasionally be mis-transcribed. For exact wording, please listen to the episode audio.*

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: For the informed pregnancy and parenting podcasts, I'm your host pregnancy focus carpreter. Dr Elliot Berlin you've tuned into the after story of a before and after birth journey my guest today Alessandra Torsani, welcome back to the podcast. This is so fun

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: My first time doing like a real human like adult experience the past week last week We were just saying at this time I was in labor. So it's so fun how it's like, oh my gosh I can't believe a week ago where I was and like where I am right now

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Do you know what's insane for you in particular at this moment is that when I talk to you like two weeks ago You don't seem any different. You still seem like you You mean I don't seem tired. No, you have like a nuclear power plant in you. You always have this crazy energy

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: It's a different energy now though

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I bet it is different. I'm just saying you're just like hi. Hey, how was your week? Yeah

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: You have to still be positive and be excited and have fun and Treat things like with somewhat normalcy if you will I'm sure I will say things that don't make any sense when it comes to like doctor terms But i'm going to try to be as informed as possible right now

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: That's fitting the theme the informed pregnancy theme. I love it. Yeah. All right. Well, let's go back to this You're at the end of your pregnancy and we do our little podcast And your plans change drastically

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: drastically drastically My doctor was the fabulous. Dr. Jay Goldberg who had passed away and I have to first and foremost say that truly like the blessing of all blessings and it's like this is why you're the like jewish god that the News of the unfortunate passing came through you which I truly appreciated because you understood that i'm a very sensitive person that like Hearing it from just a doctor's office. I think would have been such a shock to my system Even more so than what it was But you know really just like I don't think I could have been able to handle it and process it So I thank you so much for you being the one, you know And being there to kind of like go through it in my head and stuff, but it was so crazy to me because

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: I had seen this person on the thursday And then I was getting a phone call on you know, a sunday or a monday morning That I was not seeing them that week And I think that i've experienced losing people in my life and close people in my life But I think that this was such a shock to Obviously everyone but specifically to me in this situation Because it took me so long to finally be comfortable With a doctor because i've had so many issues with doctors my whole life That I felt such a connection and such a bond to this person That I just was like now what because now the entire plan everything that i've set in stone And i'm a planner is going out the window and

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: I knew like things would have to pivot in the pregnancy and in labor and in delivery and in baby life But I didn't think it would happen literally two weeks before my daughter came into the world and so You pivot, you know and you helped me find You know another wonderful doctor. Dr. Finkie who was in the same women's care group And that worked out wonderful where I got to meet another wonderful human and I was like, okay, you know, met a couple other doctors too, that they had set me up with. We didn't really vibe. I vibed with Dr. Finke. My mom vibed with Dr. Finke. Sturgis vibed with Dr. Finke. I was like, this is going to be great. Like I feel so excited about this birth. And there was no rush because that's what we had talked about

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: is I just didn't want to be induced. I didn't want someone to put pressure on me if I went over my due date, none of that. And so then everything changed once again, all over.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. So before you thought of it, how long had you been seeing Dr. Goldberg?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Just since the pregnancy.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay, how did you find him?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: I found him through one of my closest girlfriends, Jennifer Massoni, who he delivered her son Elliot and had been her OB for years and years and years. And Jennifer and I are very similar with our, you know, we played sisters in a movie. So we always laughed that we're sisters, but I looked to her as my idol, as what a female like badass should be when it comes to pregnancy and health and, you know, taking care of yourself. And I trusted her more than anyone of who her doctor was for her baby's delivery because I knew whoever was delivering her child respected what she wanted, but was also a brilliant person that was able to help out if push came to shove, the worst thing would happen of an emergency C-section

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: or like, you know, something drastic in the doctor world, right, for that situation. I knew that whoever she picked, I would trust them.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: It's hard for people outside of Los Angeles to really understand how unique Dr. Goldberg was, just so experienced and from that experience was able to bring a sense of calm, not panic to things. And, you know, you just knew that if something needed intervention or if- You would trust. Yeah, first of all, he would not miss it. He would just jump in and take care of it. And also that you knew you needed it. Otherwise he wouldn't be saying it.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Otherwise he wouldn't be suggesting it and saying it, you know, and he would laugh at me all the time of all my, you know, woo ideas that I had. And he's like, that's great, but like, this is what's really gonna happen. You know, but I trusted where I didn't feel, you know, when I interviewed some other doctors afterwards, before I decided to go with Dr. Finke, a lot of the doctors were like, yeah, but, you know, you're almost to your due date. And if you hit your due date, like the baby needs to come out. That's very bad, all this stuff. And I'm like, but why would I trust you? You know, there was no trust that had been built up. And I think, cause I live with, you know, bipolar disorder and I'd been misdiagnosed

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: my entire life by different doctors and, you know, screwed over here and there. It really takes a lot for me to trust a doctor. And it takes a lot of time. And so it felt like I finally found that person and then it was like ripped away. And then what do you do? You know, so it was kind of the best thing that I ever got from Jennifer, the best advice I ever got is she said, it doesn't matter what doctors in the delivery room with you. It's about what doctor has been there with you through the entire journey, because that's where you've spent the most time. That's where you're coherent and aware of what's going on. That's when you need the guidance, when you need the support and the love, when you're in the room,

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: you are just like focused on get this baby out of me. If there's an emergency, I wanna make sure there's a great surgeon there, you know who I trust, but that's not the magical moment. The magical moment she said you had times a hundred for the whole, you know, eight months prior before. So that was really reassuring to hear and really nice to hear. Cause now after going through what I went through, I go, wow, it's so true. Like it's all about who the nurses are and your support system in the delivery room. It's not really about who the doctor is. It's kind of irrelevant at that point. Just get a good surgeon.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: That's really true. I mean, generally the way the model works is they don't come till the very end anyway. So they're there, they're available, they're accessible in terms of

following your progress and helping make decisions, but in the room around you, it's not their energy.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Right, exactly.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: It's not. Yeah, it was so strange. I called you and a few other people who I knew who were due very soon with Dr. Goldberg before I really even accepted in my heart and mind that he was gone. He was super young, 53, and super healthy. So healthy.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: You know, it's just a very big shock. Kind of a weird thing that happened to me was, you know, he had sat with me on Thursday and I had gone to the wrong appointment time. It was supposed to be a Friday. He made time for me, no questions asked. He sat and talked to me for 20 minutes about life and about mental health. It was this really like kind of intense conversation that we had as a last conversation. But what was interesting was I kind of had in my mind that he wasn't gonna be there during my birth because he was taking his son to Peru. on my due date. And he said to me on that Thursday, he says, Now, what's going to happen? If you go in labor, run your due date, and I'm not in town, I go, Well, don't worry.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Like, my baby's not coming on the due date. Like, she's either coming before or after she's either coming this weekend, or she's coming in July, you know, and he says, Okay, well, I just want to let you know, like, I won't be here. So we have to plan. Well, you have to get in your head, like, I may not be there, you know, and I said, That's totally fine. Like, don't worry about it. So I had prep the entire weekend with my husband being like, Okay, so he's not going to be there. Let's just assume, you know, do I trust everyone at that office? Yes, I do. Like everything's going to be fine. So it was this really weird moment afterwards, where I was like, why did he say that? You know what I mean? And then you're like, you get in

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: your head and you can think about everything. But it was almost like, I had it in my head beforehand that he wasn't going to be there and that it was okay, because he was there always, you know, so it was wild.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I mean, so powerful. You know, he was very, very funny. And in a way that, you know, laughter is medicine. Yeah, funny. And I make jokes, partially because I'm face blinded. So a long story, but I've been making jokes since I'm little, I could write the book of dad jokes. And it was weird dynamic when once in a while, we'd be at a birth together. Sort of the dual and he's a doctor. And for a client, a woman who's in labor, who's open minded, and really is calm by comedy, it was basically open mic night.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: I mean, that is so fun. Like that is something that I definitely missed out

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: on. And we used to joke amongst ourselves, like, when I was in say, Oh, yeah, my doctor's Jake Wilberg. I'm like, Oh, that's so terrible because I like to be the funny one on the team. Anyway, he sent a patient to me on Thursday, the Thursday that you saw him, I suppose. And then he passed on Sunday. And then she came to see me literally during his funeral on Wednesday. Right. And I saw him the paper she wrote who referred to her and she wrote Dr. Jay Goldberg. And I just walked in there. I said, I'm so sorry. And she just broke down in tears crying. I mean, so many people did. And she said, I have to tell you that when he gave me the referral, he

asked me to give you a message. He said he wanted you to know that he's funnier and better

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: looking than you. He's never sent a message with a client before. And I'm like, how do you get the last laugh? Like, what am I supposed to say? One out of two ain't bad. He's not here anymore.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Well, I'll tell you, he was so mad on that Thursday that I was interviewing you and not him that I didn't bring my road caster. So you got that going for you. He was like, just bring the road caster. And he's like, we got a great banter. Just bring him. My kid would be really funny. Like, I don't understand. Like, why didn't you ask me to be in the podcast yet? It's ridiculous. You know? Oh, but that's so funny. Oh, that's so great. I love that. I mean, I have to say, like my whole journey experience, everything, this whole adventure would never have happened if it wasn't for him. And truly, I have to say, like I found Alicia Tambury, my hypnobirthing coach, through him, I then found

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: every connection of like, all these incredible people, whether that I interviewed on the podcast, whether that I had just part of the birthing process, all came from literally like his library that like, every time I would go in there, I'd see a book or I'd see someone's name, and I like Google who they were. So he is the base of the entire pregnancy. And so I hope he knows like, how amazing he was. And everyone knows that. And I hope his kids and wife know and that they're, you know, blessed and taken care of, you know, because that's a really tough, you know, now fourth journey for them. You know, I think that that's really hard.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. Well, I want to hear your birth story. Take a little break. But if you're curious listeners about Jay Goldberg, we have an episode of our podcast called the pregnancy taboos or something like that. And you'll really get a sense for his approach and his unique style.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: When I brought up that episode to him on that Thursday, he goes, Yeah, he's like, you didn't have to listen that episode. I told you all of that already.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. Yeah, I will say this long time ago, when it came out, I just reposted it as a tribute. But a long time ago, when it came out, it was on par with our celebrity guest episodes in terms of its popularity and downloads, because it's so funny. It's funny, and it's calming and everything so serious about pregnancy and so scared tactic oriented. It just puts Oh, I'm pregnant. I'm having a baby. It's like, you know, I eat a sandwich and I'm gonna poo. It's not exactly the same. Like have a smoke. But it's a normal biological process. And you know, everything's gonna be okay. And you had that effect on people. All right, let's take a break. We'll be right back to find out your birth story.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Welcome back. We're talking about Alessandra. Okay. How did the last couple of days of your

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: pregnancy go? Well, it's really funny. The last couple of days, I like remember, but I also don't remember. It's only been six days since I gave birth and I can't even remember being pregnant. It's the most bizarre feeling in the entire world. Like I can't remember having a belly. Like it's so strange how your mind works, but I had so much energy and I was feeling great. And I think I came to you not even a week, maybe five days before, I think five days before I

gave birth. And I remember just wanting to do everything that I possibly could to make sure my body was in an alignment and my mind was in an alignment. I wanted to make sure that everything was ready to go. And I think the weirdest thing about

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: being pregnant in the end, when you're close to your due date is not knowing when it's going to happen. So like I said earlier in the podcast, I'm such a planner. I could not plan anything. And I was like, the only thing that I need to plan right now is I need to get my hair done because if I don't get it done now, it's never going to happen. I need to get my nails done. And these were things that I thought about and that I did, but I had so much energy. I just was filled with energy. I wasn't tired. There was nothing that was really different going on except for an even more burst of energy. So the day before father's day, which was a Saturday, I went to lunch with my mom and we ran into another one of

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: my friends who's due in July and a couple other friends. And every one of them goes, oh my God, isn't today your due date? Why are you out? And I said, it is, but what am I supposed to do? You know, I, I'm not going to sit at home. You know, I'm feeling great. I had my blueberry pancakes. I had my hash browns. I was feeling awesome. And one of my friend's husband said, you know, you should go and get the salad dressing at this like famous restaurant in LA in case you want to coyote. Yes. In case you want to go in labor. And I was like, no, I'm not ready yet. You know, I'm like, give me a week and then we'll go from there. And when I had gone into the doctor, probably five days prior,

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: I think I went in either the day I saw you or the day after I saw you. He said to me, okay, well you're one centimeter dilated. And he said, I would assume that it's going to happen within five days. And I was like, really? You know, so it was the countdown of five days, you know, like that's what I thought. And he says, and if you go over, know, that's fine, too. Then we're just going to do the stress test, the non stress test, non stress test, nst. So they wanted to do the nst for the following Wednesday, if I didn't go into labor. And I was like, great, you know, awesome, no big deal. That's fine. You know, but the thing about Dr. Finkie, which was so amazing is there was no stress. It was not like, okay, if you go a day over, we need to

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: induce you. He was like, No, you just come in, we do the nst. We'll go from there. Like not a big deal. I was like, Oh, gosh, someone understands me. I'm like, relaxed. But it was funny, because I had more people writing me being like, can't you just wait for the baby to come out? Can't you just wait for the baby to come out? And I was like, No, I don't. I don't want the baby to come out. She's gonna come out when she wants to come out. You know, she's cooking still like she's not ready, you know. And so that night, I started getting really bad contractions. Like, like, I would have like cramping and I would be like, ooh, ooh, that hurts like an unfamiliar feeling that I never felt before.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Okay, slow to one second. Were you having some activity before that?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: A little bit here and there. But like, it would come at night. And I never had the cramps before I never really had Braxton Hicks the entire pregnancy. So the last like two weeks, I would have it at night. But then it didn't feel like it was in quote, unquote, contractions. It kind of just felt like, oh, it's a little tightness, you know, and then it stops, you know, activity going on.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. But you said these are bad. So these were like, oh,

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: like a little stronger. And I remember that when I came to you, you were like, Well, yep, baby's head is definitely down. Like everything was like in the right way, you know, for amusement purposes, for for amusement purposes. But I just felt like cramping. And I said, Well, let's go to dinner. I was like, because this probably is our last dinner, you know, and my husband's like, yeah. And so we went to sushi and I don't eat fish, but I love a tempura. So we go there. And they said to me, they go, Oh, what do you do? And I was like yesterday. And they were like, what? You know, it was the same day. I said today. So I went to eat. And then that night, I came home and I didn't have one cramp. And so I thought, Oh, okay, well, I guess it's not

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: happening. You know,

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: wait a second, maybe tempura is the secret to those

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: I'm telling you, I'm thinking, I'm thinking tempura did it. That's right. And then in the morning, I woke up at seven in the morning to a cramp. And I went, Oh, like this. And I like shot out of bed. And then water. And I was like, Oh, oh, okay. Is this my water breaking? Because it wasn't a lot of water. It was like a little spot. But I was like, that's weird. This doesn't feel like the movies, you know, right. It doesn't feel like that. But it feels like that, you know, was a crime in the front. Yes, it was. Yes.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: From cramp. Is that how you can tell? Like, I don't know. No, I mean, some people feel them in the front or back or both. Was it reminiscent for you of menstrual cramp?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Yes, kind of. Yeah. But it was just one sharp cramp. And then that was it. And then it went away. Okay. And so I turned to my husband, I said, Good morning. I was like, I think my water broke. I'm not sure. I said, but I'm going to take a shower, and I'm going to wash my hair, and I'm going to curl my hair. And we're going to go from there. And he was like, what? And he like pops out of bed and starts like scrambling around the house. And I was like, No, no, this is going to take so long. Like, this is not something to prep about. Like, don't get excited yet. Go back to bed, you're gonna need sleep. So I took a shower. At that point, when I got out of the shower, and I used the restroom, I peed, I lost my mucus

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: plug. And yeah, wow, that's weird. That's a weird thing, too. That's not that cute.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Describe it for the curious.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Oh, it's like a loogie. I don't know. That's what I would say. It's like so nasty. And I was small, big. And my mom was staying down the street and I had called her and I was like, I think I lost this. Like, I think she was like 100%. She's like, but we're timing your things, you know, because Dr. Vangie said do not come to the hospital, you know, unless a little bloody, but not crazy. You know, yeah, mostly like that. Am I too

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: investigative about the plug? No, no, no, not at all. I'm really into

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: this stuff. So I like people always ask, like, what is it gonna look like? It's like a giant loogie. Like, that's what it would come out of the hood. Yeah. And you're like, Whoa, like, that's bizarre. What's this? You know, and then there was light spotting. So I would say it would be like a light period. That's what it was. No, no, no, like pale pink, very, very, very pale. But that's the first time that I've seen any color where I was like, Whoa, you know what I mean? Like through my pregnancy, like, so it was like kind of off putting. But he said, you know, when you have contractions, two minutes for about three hours straight, then come into the hospital every two minutes.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Wow. Okay. That's close together. So I was like, that's fine. You know, it'll work for me. So my nails started chipping and I was like, oh, shoot. I was like, I got to go get my nails done. So I went to get my nails done with my mom, the nail salon. I've been going to the forever. They were like, are you having the baby right here? They asked my mom if I was going to have the baby right there. I had three contractions while they were doing my nails. My mom took pictures. We were breathing through the contractions and Sturgis was like, you know, I knew who I married and I knew who I was getting pregnant, but I cannot believe that you went and you got your nails done while you were in labor. And I was like, well, you know, I don't know.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: But at this point, it was still every six minutes. I feel like waxing would have been even more. That would have been crazy. Once I'm here. Yeah. I'm here. It was about every six minutes. So I knew I still had a long time to go, you know, and I was doing all my hypnobirthing. I was doing my affirmations. I was 18 minutes. Yeah. I just needed to change a polish change. They look great. Yeah. No, they did a great polish. I think they couldn't wait to get me the F out of there because I was like hyperventilating. I pictured

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: they had one of those ladies on each of your nails. Literally, literally like freaking out.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Yeah. And then I honestly, you know, came back to the house and it was every six minutes and I was so hungry and my mom's like, okay, well, if you're going to eat, I think you need to eat now, you know, because you're not going to be able to eat in the hospital. Who knows how long this could last. And what's so funny is my mom was 42 weeks pregnant when she gave birth to me. So everyone in the family has always been two weeks. So she kind of knew the process. Her mucus plug. She lost it at seven in the morning and she gave birth to me at eight 46 PM later that day. So her trajectory of like her, you know, labor process was quite similar to mine. So she was like, okay, this is going to happen later in the afternoon.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: It's noon. You should probably eat now. So you're not like, you know, and I said, okay, I want ill term as you know, it's my favorite restaurant. I want my penny marinara. I want a caprese sandwich. Like, let's just do this and go from there. Great. I do that. I write Alicia Tambury. I go, by the way, I think I'm in labor. Everything's great. We'll let you know if there's any problem, you know, if I need any help, you know, okay, keep me updated, blah, blah, blah. My contractions jumped from six minutes to probably four to three minutes, really fast. And that labor, the contractions went from the front immediately to 100% in the back. Oh, no. Wow. Okay. I always wanted to record some of the video

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: of me having labor, like pains, you know, so I kind of set up a camera and I forgot about it. Oh, and oh, it was on. And it was on. And I had my mom holding me up Sturgis behind me doing the like, you know, the confusing the number eight spine, like hypnotherapy thing thing on my back. So I figured figure eight, thank you. On my back, walking around the whole place. But it was the weirdest sensation because I have a high pain tolerance. You know this, like I'm very high pain tolerance. There was not a moment that would go by with these contractions where I didn't think I was like done. Truly. It was so bad in my back because I couldn't stand. I couldn't sit. I couldn't be on the birth ball. I couldn't

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: lean over. No matter what I did, I felt like I was having back spasms and I was like paralyzed

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: at the same time. Can I ask two questions? Sure. Was the intensity like that during the surge only or even in between in between as well? Yeah. Oh, wow. So there's no break

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: and no comfortable position. No, there was no comfortable position. There was no break. And

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I mean, it jumped from the front to the back so fast. And so you're saying the intensity in

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: the front was not as strong. No, I didn't have anything in the front. I was like, give me the front. Like I can handle that, you know, but it was so bizarre being in the back spasm because it was like I've had back spasms before where you're just paralyzed. You know, you can't do anything about it. And it was so weird because I was not thinking that, oh, your back is going to spasm. You know, I just I didn't think that that was ever going to happen to me. I think people really think about back

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: when they think about birth. But is this all being recorded on your secret camera?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: We had about 15 minutes and it went from me being in a t-shirt to completely naked because I was hyperventilating. So I was so hot. I just couldn't even breathe and be comfortable. And I couldn't even cry. That's how much pain I was in. Like I wanted to cry so badly. And so at this point, I was like, okay, now it had then gone every two minutes. And I couldn't even stand up. And I was so scared to go in the car because I'm like, how am I going to sit in the car? Oh,

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: wow. How far are you from the hospital? About 22 minutes. So

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: it wasn't bad. And that was a very specific out. Well,

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: because I remember, I remember, we have that on Google

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Maps. That's right. So the car was all packed, like everything was all great. And at six o'clock, I turned to my husband, I said, we need to go to the hospital because now I'm getting a little nervous, you know, when we head to the hospital. And of course, we hit Hollywood and six police cars pop out in front of us and pull out and guns are pulled and they're off to get some

guy that like went into a street. So they had a street closure. And I was like, just drive, just drive. And my mom was following us behind in her car. I was like, just go, you know, and we hit potholes. And where are you in the car? In the front seat? Yeah, sitting in the front seat, sitting in the front seat. But like, the way that I had had myself

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: positioned was almost like as if I straightened out my legs and like had perfect. I was only comfortable when I had perfect posture. That was the only time that I could handle being in the back labor pains as if I stood up back labor, like literally the bottom, bottom, of your spine on top of the whole spine. And it went all the way down to my toes every time I had a contraction. It was like both both sides. Yeah, it was like sciatic

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: pain. So guns drawn. You push past it, push past it, pull

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: up to the hospital. And Sturgis was going to of course, the valley was not there. It was Father's Day Sunday. And I was like, wow, what a gift you're getting today. And by the way, I can't wait to see what you get him next year. Oh, not another baby. And he valued my car, my mom's car. And they were like, we really want to get a wheelchair for you, ma'am. And I was like, I cannot sit like I cannot move. And I was like, no. And I just stormed as fast as I could up there. Because at this point, I was having contractions about every minute and a half, I would say, you know, so you follow the instructions. Yeah. So I just went right up

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: there and still in your back. All in my back. It never stopped in my back. Never. I would be a terrible podcaster if we didn't take a little break here at the suspenseful moment. Oh, yeah. I can't wait to see what happens after these little commercials. We'll be right back. Welcome back. You're on fire. They want to put you in a wheelchair. And if anything, it sounds like a wheelchair is the wrong thing. It's more like that luggage transportation thing at the hotel. Yes, exactly. And then we'll stand and

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: hold on to something. Yeah. And at this point, you know, I had been laboring for, you know, X amount of hours since seven o'clock and the contractions were getting bad at like, you know, I was feeling them in my back at around 10, 11 a.m. So, I mean, we're talking a long time for me to have been going through all of this. And when I got to the hospital, they wanted me to sign all these papers and I had my mom do it. And they're like, no, she can't do it. You have to do it. And I was like, I don't know how people have the energy to scream during labor. You know, my mom was the same way. She never understood it because I was so internally in so much pain that I couldn't even let out like a roar. I was so

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: internally focused and just in such pain. And so they came to check me and they said, oh, you're six centimeters dilated. This was in the pre labor and delivery

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: room. So many questions already. Oh, go for it. Yeah. So you're saying you weren't vocal.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: No, I was like, like, just more like breathing down, like really just like breathing.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I mean, you made it through a really long time with that kind of intensity. Was the hypnobirthing that you did helpful?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Game changer. I listened to those affirmations in the car. And we had them on repeat, like blasting in the car. And everything that I had learned that I thought I forgot, all came back to me. And it was like, focus. It was like, do not exert any energy that you don't have to right now on anything else, but just focusing on getting to your destination, you know, and that's what it was. And I truly like, even though my birth plan in quote, unquote, did not go the way that I thought it would, it literally like the same thing with Dr. Goldberg, where it was like those eight months to prep was all that I needed. It was the six months of hypnobirthing that I had prepped beforehand. That just kicked in, it kicked in.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Was your exam? I mean, I can't even picture a comfortable position for them to do your

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: they were doing on the back and I was miserable. But they had to, you know, I was like, I get it, you know, I was just like,

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: is the report six centimeters, what is that to you? Is that that was nothing. That was something you were like, I feel like I'm 10 and ready to push. Yeah. Yeah.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Okay. I was a little deflated. I was definitely deflated, but I also knew, wow. Okay. I did do six centimeters on my own here at home. You know, that's better than them saying three and a half, you know, and that's fine, you know? And what was encouraging, they kept saying, you know, wow, you're already at six. You might be moving along faster. And I had been with friends a couple of days before. And one of the women had had a C-section because she couldn't get past four and a half centimeters for like days.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So you're like, I'm passed.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: I'm like, well, if I'm past that, okay, that seems to be all right. You know, and they brought me up to the labor and delivery room. I had the most insane room ever. And I don't remember it until after the birth, but I looked back at pictures and video and I was like, this is gorgeous. Oh, my gosh. I had this fabulous Florida ceiling, windows, and it was gorgeous.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You have the Hollywood sign.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Like the sun was just setting. Like everyone was excited. I had a bath. I had a shower. Like I was like hooked up.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: This must be room one or room two.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: It was room two. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. So Hollywood. So Hollywood. I felt so special. So I was like, oh, this is great. You know, I was so excited to take a shower because I'm such a water person and water is so healing to me. And I couldn't wait to stand in the shower and just have it on my back because that's what I had done earlier in the day. And that helped me a lot. I probably spent an hour in the shower earlier in the day. And that had helped so much with my back. So I was so excited to get that moment. Right. And then they were like, oh, that's sweet. You're so far

along. That's not happening. We have to hook you up to check the baby's heart rate. You know, I'm like, what?

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: When did you skip triage?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: No, triage is where they check to see if I was six centimeters.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: But they didn't put you on the monitor there.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: They put me on a monitor for like a second. But I was in and out of triage in probably 20 minutes. Like, wow. And they brought me right up to labor and delivery, like right up. And I was in there. Then they were checking the baby's heart rate. And I was like, I'm so sorry, I can't sit on my back. And I have to give a shout out. There was a nurse named Kayla, who is my nurse. And she was the most incredible nurse I've ever had in my entire life. She was a game changer. And if I didn't have her, I don't think that I would have been able to get through this, honestly, because she was just completely. She had my back pun intended, you know. But, you know, she respected that I needed to walk around

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: and that I was someone that didn't want to stay in one place. So she put the Bluetooth heart monitor on my stomach for the baby. But as technology is, it didn't work, you know, and she kept having to unclasp it and put it back on because the heart rate would just disappear and she would panic and then put it back on. You know, it wasn't it wasn't working to the point where then she said, I have to have it hooked up on the monitor. The non Bluetooth one, the like one that's actually plugged in. She sat on her knees for about an hour, holding the heart monitor, finding the baby's heart rate for me so I could still sit up and move around a little bit. But she was in control of constantly moving it.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: I gave her a pillow on her knees and she was fine. It's fine. Like, that's how incredible this human was, because she knew that I was in such back pain that I couldn't just lay there. But it was a scary thing because the baby's heart would just stop. And it wasn't that the baby's heart would stop. It was that the monitor monitor couldn't find it. Right. So on top of all of the monitor stuff going on, my baby was flip flopping from left to right every two seconds. And she was not panicked. Her heart rate wasn't high. She just was moving her way down and like flopping like a fish going back and forth, like out of water.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So you had the back pains and then she was flopping.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: And I was like, I can't do this. Like it was to a point where I was like, I don't know how I'm going to labor any longer, because now they were like every 45 seconds to one minute. And I couldn't even have a break to have a sip of water before it would come again. Wow. And we walked to the restroom. I was like, I have to pee. Take me to the bathroom. My mom and I went to the bathroom and she looked at me and I had so much black under my eyes. I was white as a ghost. She's like, I can't hold you up anymore. My husband couldn't hold me up anymore. Kayla couldn't hold me up anymore. I was so weak. She was like, I was like, we have to do something. Something has to happen. You know, and I didn't want an epidural. no matter what at all costs.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: But we had a secret word. If I said the word pineapple, pineapple meant I want an epidural. So I could scream epidural all I wanted, but until I said pineapple, pineapple was the real thing. So I looked at my mom and I started crying and I said, I'm a failure if I get an epidural. Yeah, yeah, the Jewish guilt inside, you know? And she was like, no, you're not. You've labored this long. You have no idea what you're going through. And she was like, you're having a back labor. This is completely different than what you prepared for, you know? So I said pineapple and Kayla's like, you're sure? I go pineapple. I screamed it as loud as I could. So they came in to give me an epidural. At that point, they needed to check to see how far I was

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: and I was eight and a half centimeters. And when they gave me the epidural, I had the biggest contraction yet while it was going inside. Now when you're supposed to sit there, not moving at all. Yep. So I credit my hypnobirthing because I literally stared into my husband's eyes and was just breathing and breathing and breathing and thinking of my mantra and thinking of my affirmations. And it took about 20 minutes for the epidural to kick in. But by that point, I was like, okay, we're good. Like I can breathe and I could relax and I could rest. And so I'm a big Transcendental Meditation person, TM. So I took that opportunity. They were waiting for the doctor and they said, it's gonna be about 15 minutes.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: I said, okay, I'm going to do my mantra and I'm going to meditate for 10 minutes while I have this epidural going and I'm not in pain.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Once in a while, the story's so captivating. We go a little long and we had an extra break. This is getting really good. We'll be right back. Welcome back. We're talking to Alessandra Oy. Okay, pineapple. You know what happened? I was at a birth where she forgot the word.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: She forgot the word epidural? No, she forgot their code word for epidural. Oh my God, I didn't know like this code word was a thing, but one of our mutual, like Sergius and my friends who just had a baby as well, they did this for their first birth. And they were like, no, you have to come up with a code word. I was like, oh my God, that's so cool. So that's how it came up.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: But they changed the code word a few times. I don't know why it's that important. You just pick a word and go with it. They changed the code word a few times during pregnancy and she forgot the code word and she was using an old code word and it's like, are you serious or are you just? Oh my God. She's like, oh my gosh. She's like, oh my God. Just oh my God. Oh my gosh. Oh my God. We changed it to blue monkey. Okay. Oh my God. Nope.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: So I said pineapple. I did my transdental meditation. This wonderful doctor came in and she said, we're just waiting for Dr. Lebrant. And I said, where's Dr. Vicky? And they go, he's not on call. So that was interesting. So after all that of the panic of me getting a new doctor and really liking that doctor, that doctor wasn't available. So talk about pivoting again. And that was okay. So Dr. Lebrant came in and she delivered one of my other friend's babies. So I knew that she was a wonderful, wonderful doctor that I was gonna trust as well. And at that point, like I said, it doesn't really matter, right? You have a great surgeon and a great person part of the group, like call it today. And she came in and she was like,

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: well, we're basically ready. I have to go help this other person first. And I could hear the woman next door to me in room one screaming bloody murder. And I was like, oh my God, like, oh gosh, oh my gosh, I was like, this is crazy. And she goes, we're gonna do a practice push just to see where you're at and all this stuff. And at this point, my epidural started wearing off, but I did a practice push and this poor doctor, Savannah, wonderful, don't know her last name, but loved her. It was like out of a Fairly Brother movie, my rest of my water burst onto her face, onto her chest, onto her pants, into her hair. And it was like a water balloon and someone popped it. And it was like a movie.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: That's the one you were looking for at the beginning. Right, that's right.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: So yeah, I got my moment.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wait, this is a nurse?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: It was a doctor who was working under LeBrant.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, I see.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: And she was so sweet and she goes, we're totally fine. I need to change. I will be right back and we will go from there. And I was like, okay. So then here comes in Dr. Katz, the famous Dr. Katz. And he's kind of like the head honcho, I would say of the women's group, right? When you say like, he's like the old school guy, like they've been around forever. He comes in and at this point I'm a little loopy from my epidural, even though it's wearing off physically. I'm still a little loopy. And I said to him, I go, you know, Dr. Werber is the veterinarian that I go to who's like one of his like dear friends. And I was like, I was just with Dr. Werber. We were talking about you, like all this stuff.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: He's like, so are we having a puppy right now? I don't get your joke, but like, no, we're not. I'm just telling you, he says, hello, you know, I know all the good Jewish doctors. Okay. Like, you know. And I was like, well, I got to go help out this other girl because someone was getting a C-section. He's like, but I wanted to come in and like check up on you and make sure everything was okay. And I was like, okay, you know, I'm like, so confusing. Why is everyone coming in to like talk like this baby's coming, you know, and at this point they had told me I was 10 centimeters dilated and to close my legs until the doctor came out and the nurse Kayla goes, you know, you could honestly pop this baby out on your own.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: And I was like, oh my God, you know, so Dr. Lebrant comes in and she was great. She laughs. She goes, you know, I was asleep and they were calling my boyfriend to see where I was. And he says she's sleeping and they go, we need an extra set of hands and I'm here. She goes, I'm rested. I'm feeling great. Let's get this baby out, you know? And as she says that she goes, okay, let's get ready to push all the doctors, all the nurses, my mom, Sturgis, everyone stops because all of the electric shades in the entire room start going up and down on their own.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: What?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Uh-huh. I don't know if you believe in spirits, but I do. And everyone stopped and Dr. Lebrant goes, you know, my dad comes to me through electricity all the time. And I said, well, my great Aunt Claudia and my grandmother, Dorothy, come to me through electricity. And my mom goes, I think it's Dr. Goldberg. And it was like this really weird, like everyone had chills, like everyone kind of was like, what is going on? Maybe we're just watching them go on their own, like up and down, up and down, up and up. And then they stopped. And then she goes, all right, you ready to push? Let's get this baby out. It was so bizarre. One thing I'm forgetting right before she came in, I felt everything. And I said that to them.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: And the guy who gave me the epidural was like, you shouldn't feel everything. I'm going to give you a labor push. There you go. Right. So like a light one or whatever that is, which let me tell you, I still felt everything. But like, thank God I had this. You'll know why. I did three sets of pushes right in a way. Like one, two, three, one, two, three, one, two, three. Baby was out. They told me it could take one to three hours. She was out in 45 seconds. And I didn't scream. I didn't do anything. All I asked for was I go, I'm a hippie. And I was like, I just want you to cut my bra off. I can't breathe. I was like, I want to be naked. And like everyone was like, oh, my God, this is so weird.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Everyone's like a cute, like, you know, undergarments on her, like a cute, like, you know, you know, shirt on. And me, I'm like, yeah, I like I want to be free. Like, let's go, you know. And my beautiful baby came out to the end of that some more and to the beginning of Frank Sinatra. Luck be a lady. And she popped on out, came right here. And I had a second degree tear and they had to stitch me up. And everything was great. And then everyone left the room and they go, you have a great baby. Your baby's so strong. They go, she literally swam out on her own. That was insane. It was pretty wild. And then I saw the nurse Kayla hit like a code red button. I saw my mom's face gasp. My husband almost fainted.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: And I started hemorrhaging blood clots after they sewed me up. So the doctors started coming in. Then more doctors, then more doctors, then more doctors, then ultrasound machines, then all this stuff. At this point, I wasn't aware of what was going on because I was like, oh, baby, baby, baby. But I was on your chest. Right. But I knew something was up because they kept saying, now, you're going to feel this. You might feel pressure, blah, blah, blah, all the stuff. The placenta also came out on a side note right after her, like pretty much the same time, within like 30 seconds. So I saw this one doctor, he had sleeve tattoos. He was so cool, so hip. And he was examining the placenta. And he was trying to see if it was perfectly intact.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: And it was. And they couldn't understand why I was hemorrhaging blood clots like really badly. They almost had to give me a blood transfusion, but it luckily didn't get that far. But they couldn't understand. And Dr. Savannah was so sweet. She goes, OK, you're going to feel this. And I look in the ultrasound. And like I would say the whole hand and like mid arm was in the ultrasound inside me. They were pulling out clots. and they were just pulling stuff out. They just didn't understand why it was stopping. And then afterwards, what I found out the next day through my husband is, I guess, they were doing a bimanual massage on my uterus because my uterus didn't contract after I gave birth.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: So they were massaging it and giving it contractions manually to get it to stop like the blood clots and to get it to start retracting back. Um, yeah. So that went on for a really long time. And by long time, I mean, like 10, 15 minutes, but, you know, like, you can bleed out at 10 minutes, you know, like that's very serious.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So I assume they're also giving you drugs, no?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: No, there was no time, nothing to help you contract. They did when they started to get it going. Then they gave me pitocin for over 24 hours, which was so painful. Like, you know, I mean, I was in excruciating pain for 24 hours after. Cause you know, I was like just on Tylenol and Motran, and then they have pitocin going and I had just had someone's fist up my vagina. And a baby came out, you know, it was, it was a lot, you know, but there were a lot of hands that were in there trying to get it to contract manually before they even did the pitocin. So it was like, you know, I didn't realize how traumatic it was until afterwards when, you know, everyone's like, it's great. We're going to bring you down to postpartum. I go down to postpartum.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: And at that point it was seven in the morning because I gave birth at three 30 in the morning. So it was 21 hours of labor.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, I mean, 21 hours, truthfully for a first baby, it's not super long, but, uh, but unmedicated, I think unmedicated and quite eventful and the back labor.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: So, you know, everything was fine and everything ended up being great. And the uterus was doing great, but I will say the trauma of it all really hit me the next night. You know, when I was in the hospital, I just was crying and crying and crying and crying and crying because I just felt like so weak, you know, and I had lost so much blood and I just couldn't believe that that happened and I didn't realize it, you know, but it was a blessing in disguise because I thought, you know what, if I didn't have the epidural, I wouldn't have been able to handle probably the birth, let alone them afterwards, the after, you know, so I'm a firm believer and you have to put everything in God, right?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: And say, like, you know, what's meant to be is meant to be, you know, and as much as I felt like a failure in the moment before I got the epidural afterwards, I was like, thank God, I did listen to my gut and I did listen to my instincts because I wouldn't have been able to handle that. And it's interesting because I always thought, oh, maybe I'd have a home birth or something, but I'm also very realistic of if there's an emergency, I want to be there and have the best surgeons around me, you know, and it was one of those things where no matter what I would have done, even if I didn't push, even if I did in a certain angle at a home birth, it didn't matter because the uterus itself was just a weak

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: uterus and I would have bled out and that would have been it, you know, if I did this at home. And so I'm very blessed and very lucky that I was around the best surgeons, you know, in the world that helped out and that were there within two minutes to just save me because I've never been in a situation where it's been so scary, right, where I like think about it now. And I had my mom film the birth and it's crazy because I saw a little bit of the clot and I had to turn the phone off. I can't watch it. And I was like, that's so not me because I'm someone that loves

gore and gush and stuff. But it was so traumatic and I didn't realize that it was such a process to go through and how many women must go through this, you know.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: But now I'm here and I'm home with a really cute baby and she's real fun and, you know, obviously sore as ever could be, but it's a good time. And I just feel really blessed and really happy.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So did you go with my name or so?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: I didn't go with or so. Her name is Lady.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, Lady. I mean, like, wow. With the music and everything.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Was that preplanned?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: It was not. I have called her little lady in my belly for the entire time and we did not think that was going to be the name at all. And, you know, we had to give the birth certificate and I was like, I don't know what her name is going to be. We don't know, you know, and we had the last hour we were in the hospital and postpartum, an ear technician came in to test her hearing and he says, oh, does she have a name? And we said, no, but I call her lady, you know, and he goes, oh my gosh, Lady Adams. He's like, that reminds me of Shirley Temple. She's destined for stardom. And I was like, if you know me, like anyone that says Shirley Temple. I would get excited for. And this like young 22 year old kid, like said, like surely temple.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: I'm like, what? And I, and my husband, I look at each other. We're like, well, that kind of sealed the deal. Like that's what we want. So he's like, all right. So lady Francis Adams is now part of this world.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Beautiful.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Congratulations.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Thank you.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You worked for it.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Yeah, I did.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I mean, yeah, I'm so impressed really, they were able to just with so many twists and turns, starting, you know, with Dr. Goldberg and then all the way through. I mean, it sounds like you almost went through every doctor in the practice.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: I did.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: At the mall, I think.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. And to just be able to roll with it. It's such a powerful example of what you're capable of. And I appreciate you for sharing that story.

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Well, thank you for being a part of this because it literally, like you've been such a godsend and truly like just so kind and so understanding and to be able to hear such unfortunate news from you is something that was all like part of the plan. You know, I really couldn't have heard it from anyone else truly.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Just honored to have been a part of your trusted team and to play a tiny role in your journey, but you do a lot of work through your podcast to share important information and stories. How can we find you? Where do we find you?

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: Yeah. It's called emotional support, but it's spelt emotional support, but everyone calls me Al, so it's easy that way. Motion out and it's great. And this season has been dedicated. I recorded this season for all. You are a guest, your beautiful wife. Alyssa is a guest and it's so great because I get to interview, you know, it's kind of like a live diary that I got to keep an audio diary of my journey of going through, you know, this pregnancy journey while being off my medication. I live with bipolar disorder. And so I talk a lot about that, but I also interview specialists and doctors and celebrities and, you know, talking about their own stories and not the incoherent quote birth stories, but they're mental health stories

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: and how they, you know, were able to cope what tools, what resources, what modalities they practice. And, you know, I interview wonderful postpartum specialists and just different types of crystal healers and all kinds of fun stuff. And then you, we talk about, you know, how important, you know, aligning your body is and before the birth process and yeah, so it's great. So you can find it wherever you listen to any of your podcasts. It's just emotional support, emotional support.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And also where on the social media,

ALESSANDRA TORRESANI: you can find me at Alessandra Torasani. It's a mouthful, but if you Google, you know, somehow figure out the name. It does show up.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Like even if you get close, you're the one that's pretty good. Go for that. Go for that. Ali says, all right, Alessandra. Thanks again for being here. And to our listeners, thanks for listening to us. And so if you want to connect, we're also on that Instagram thing, D O C T O R B E R L I.

Enjoying the Informed Pregnancy Podcast?

Visit us at **informedpregnancy.com** for episodes, articles, and resources for pregnancy, birth, and beyond.

Want more? Subscribe to **Informed Pregnancy+** at **informedpregnancy.tv** for films, series, and exclusive content.