A Before & After Birth Story with Aimee Carrero: Part Two

Episode 466 · July 3, 2025 · with Aimee Carrero

IN THIS EPISODE

Actress Aimee Carrero's path to parenthood has been anything but ordinary: IVF, heartbreaking loss, a surprise diagnosis — and filming a major TV show in New York City during the final weeks of pregnancy. She returns to Dr. Elliot Berlin, DC for Part 2 of her before-and-after story, including her hopes and wish list for the delivery.

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: My guest today is returning because she is so fascinating and interesting that our three segment episode turned into a six segment episode. If you remember from last time, she had a vibrant Miami upbringing and then Hollywood success. We talked about her path to parenthood, which has been anything but ordinary. IVF, heart breaking loss, a surprise diagnosis, and up until just now, filming a major TV show in New York City during the very final weeks of her pregnancy. We've talked about some of it, but now we're going to get into the meaty motherhood parts on pregnancy focused chiropractor, Dr. Elliot Berlin, and you're listening to the informed pregnancy podcast. Amy Carrera, welcome back to the podcast.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Almost never do a double, but you're so interesting, a great storyteller. I feel like I'm listening to the podcast being in it when I'm talking to you.

AIMEE CARRERO: That is the ultimate compliment.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And I'm like, even if there's a commercial, I'm going to come back afterwards.

AIMEE CARRERO: I love it.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Everything.

AIMEE CARRERO: So nice.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So we talked about your upbringing and murder at the school and all sorts of cool stuff like that. If you didn't hear it, I'd suggest going back and listening to the other one. But now you're nine months pregnant and you sort of came from, I don't think I'm ever going to have kids. And you are, and you have this great relationship with a wonderful guy. How did you get past that? I'm not having kids.

AIMEE CARRERO: Well first I had to get through the, I'm not ever getting married thing. That sort of resolved itself pretty quickly once I found the right person and I'm like, oh, I get it. I get why people get married. And there was just something about, I had this thing in my head ever since I was a kid that was like, you have to have a good reason to have children. You have to have a good reason. And I could never come up with a reason. And you know, I'd heard other people's reasoning and I always like didn't think they were good enough. And I don't really have a reason other than I think my husband hung the moon and I would love another one of him in the world. I see how he lights up a room.

AIMEE CARRERO: I see how he changes people's day and to, you know, bring someone into the world that with at least half of that DNA feels right to me. Again, it doesn't feel like I must have this or it never felt that way. Once we started having those conversations, I found myself, you know, and I don't know if other women will identify with this, but, you know, you spend your whole life trying not to get pregnant as a young person, you know, and you have dreams where you're pregnant. You wake up in a flop sweat and you're just like, oh, I think that was a dream, you know, even when I was like a virgin, I'd be like, oh, gosh, that's never, you know, thank God it was a dream. And then something shifted in our marriage.

AIMEE CARRERO: You know, we've been married almost nine years, so we waited a long time. But something shifted where I would have those dreams and I didn't wake up in a sweat. You know, I would kind of think, oh, well, you know, that doesn't send me into a panic. So something must be changing. And I think having kids was something that was never important to me until I found the right person. And I'm like, OK, it's important to you. It's becoming important to me slowly, but surely. And so that's how we started the IVF journey. It wasn't even because we tried and didn't have success. I just was getting older and I knew that I hadn't gotten to that yes point yet. And I wanted to preserve fertility.

AIMEE CARRERO: So when I was thirty three, thirty six now, maybe it was thirty two. We decided that it would be a good time to free some embryos for the future.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So you did the first half of IVF.

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah, we did the first half and then we just left him there. And the freezer next to the Klondike first. Yeah, exactly. And, you know, it was a weird experience because so many people that I know, it's their last resort. You know, it's the last chance. They come to it already. So having suffered a lot, you know, we went through it blissfully unaware of what infertility felt like because we just didn't think it would ever be our story. But we just wanted them as a backup.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So is that process for you? Was it totally science, medicine and mechanics, or was there some like exciting element of creating life?

AIMEE CARRERO: Well, the Catholic thing was an interesting addition. So I actually felt a little bit weird about it because Catholicism. Yeah. Yeah. Because in Catholicism, the idea is once the sperm meets the egg, then that's life. Right. So a person. So the idea of like, now we've got four people on ice. You know, like, what are we going to do? We're not going to have four kids. We're going to throw them down the toilet. And my views have changed, obviously, but there is that thing in the back of your head that is like a relic of the past, like a tape playing over and over again. Ultimately, it wasn't a deterrent for us and for me. And we went through with it, but I felt very detached from the whole

AIMEE CARRERO: process. I was actually working when I was doing that retrieval. I was on a show about the making of The Godfather with Miles Teller. It's called The Offer. And it was like the telling of the filming of The Godfather. And I remember, you know, wearing these like kind of tight 70s clothes and feeling like really bloated and having to tell the costume designer like, I'm doing IVF, you know, and having to tell everyone because my trigger shot was like in the middle of a night shoe and I was working. But it all felt kind of organic a little bit. I was like, well, this is who I am. I'm a working actor. I'm doing this thing. I'm preserving my fertility. It felt empowering at the time, you know, and it felt OK.

AIMEE CARRERO: And like I said, I didn't have any kind of the emotional baggage that a lot of people come to IVF with and rightfully so. Fertility perspective. Yeah. Just from like a godly, guilty perspective.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, pretty much. And also being like, wow, this is costing thirty six thousand dollars. That's before they even come out. But if you divide by the number of eggs and embryos, it's a lot less expensive. Actually, this year, eggs got really expensive, so they sure did.

AIMEE CARRERO: And they're still expensive. Man, I actually knew a girl that I worked with at the restaurant that sold her eggs. Not all of them, obviously. Well, that's stupid, Amy. I think you got to keep a few in the freezer.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. But, you know, they pay more than the sperm. The sperm is less in demand.

AIMEE CARRERO: So easy to come by.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, I think it's like 20 bucks per submission.

AIMEE CARRERO: But when it comes to eggs.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, exactly. It's pretty expensive. Yeah. OK. So you got past that phase. But it sounds like just to like have them in case you want.

AIMEE CARRERO: Just to have them. Yeah, yeah. And then after that, when I got a little older or a couple of years went by, and I remember working on this movie, The Menu, and one of the actresses, Hong Chow, she was on set. Now, I'm like, obviously, this pregnant thinking at the time, I was like, cool, you know, but she had an eight week old. I cannot imagine. Well, it's going to be me. I mean, it'll be me later this summer. Literally. Yeah. But she might imagine. Yeah, right. You will. She had an

eight week old. And, you know, she would be pumping like in her trailer. And I thought it was so cool, you know, that she was able to do her job. And even though an eight week old is not cognizant of that,

AIMEE CARRERO: it would be important for me as a mother to tell my child, like, I get to do this. You know, it's not easy being away from you, but I love to go to work. You know, it's something my mother did really well. You know, she really loved her job and always painted it as an important thing for a woman to do, is to have another outlet other than motherhood, you know, that made them feel valued and like you have somewhere to be, something to do. And so I want to pass that on. But anyway, after we wrapped on that movie, I was like, maybe it's time to do a transfer or maybe it's time for us to try. But then we'd paid the $36,000. So I'm like, we tested the embryo. What are we doing here? Very expensive.

AIMEE CARRERO: And then also, you know, that sort of Catholic guilt in the back of my head of like, I don't want them to go to waste, you know, like, let's use them. They've been PGT tested, you know, for any genetic or chromosomal issues. And that was really important to me because I was terrified of having a miscarriage.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, why? I mean, what put that kind of terror in your mind?

AIMEE CARRERO: I don't know, because I guess I didn't know many people who talked openly about miscarriage up to that point. I had one friend who was very open about her miscarriage, but she was the only one that I knew that had talked about it openly, at least to me. So I'm sure I know dozens of people. And now having had one and sharing it, you know, it's almost like everyone I know has had one.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Spoiler alert. But I do have this question. Were you actively blocking a natural pregnancy during that time during those two years?

AIMEE CARRERO: Well, I had gotten off birth control in 2020 because I'd read somewhere and I'm not a scientist. This is not science advice. But I just read somewhere that, you know, I'd been on hormonal birth control for many years at that point, and I'd read somewhere that, you know, you could very easily track your cycle. And if you had a consistent, you know, cycle that it's easy to track, you know, unless you had some sort of like PCOS or something like that, it would be harder to track. But my period was always on time. I'd never had any issues. So I got off hormonal birth control and I started on the charting apps, you know, and so we were actively abstaining on the days that were high fertility. So we never tried naturally.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Got it. So since working backwards, you had a miscarriage. Was that one that you tried for naturally or did you know one of the golden embryos?

AIMEE CARRERO: We took one of the golden embryos and I just didn't think it was possible. Like, I didn't think that with an IVF tested embryo, you could have a miscarriage because up to that point, well, yeah, I was really confident. The only thing I thought maybe could happen is if it didn't take or something. You know, that was the only thing I was prepared for. And I remember, you know, doing all the acupuncture and the teas and all of that. And I was doing everything, you know, getting really healthy, taking all the vitamins, getting ready to be pregnant. And this was November 2023. And so

we did a transfer and it took.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: It took and you saw like a positive fetus or the blood tests were?

AIMEE CARRERO: Both, both, yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: OK, so that's there, there's something in there.

AIMEE CARRERO: There's something in there. And when you do IVF, they do a lot of ultrasounds, which is always so shocking to me when I talk to someone with like a natural pregnancy. I don't know what else to call it, but a spontaneous, I guess, pregnancy, a sexual pregnancy, if you like. They're like, oh, yeah, I didn't have my first ultrasound until 12 weeks. I'm like, what? You know, so we had a really early ultrasound, not the heartbeat one, but one at maybe like five weeks to ensure that there was a pregnancy in the uterus, that it wasn't ectopic or anything. And I was feeling like really sick by five weeks. I was like throwing up and I'd heard at that time, like the sicker, the better, you know what I mean?

AIMEE CARRERO: That means that, you know, your chances of miscarriage are long. Healthy, high hormones. Yeah, good, good HCG, you know, whatever, tripling, doubling, whatever. So you could imagine our total surprise at first, honestly, when we went for the heartbeat ultrasound and there was nothing there. It was a blighted ovum, which was what I was diagnosed with, which sounds like the world's worst rock band, blighted ovum. And I didn't know what that was. And I remember just being in such shock, I didn't even cry in the room. I was like, what? And I was like, what causes that? And the doctor was like, well, usually 99.9% of the time, it's some sort of genetic abnormality or chromosomal abnormality. I was like, but we tested these embryos.

AIMEE CARRERO: And she was like, well, there's a 5% chance that it could be wrong. And I was like, that's news to me. Like, do you remember that episode of Friends where Rachel gets pregnant and Ross comes out with a box of condoms? He's like, it says 97%. Did you know it was only 97%? So I went through that kind of like, what? You know, and she was like, so you have two options. We could either do a DNC because this was caught at seven weeks. So she was like, we could either do a DNC, which they don't do at the fertility clinic. You got to find someone else to do it. Or you could follow yourself around with a Tupperware and collect the products of conception on your own.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wow. Which sounded even like more tragic and triggering than anything.

AIMEE CARRERO: So my husband and I got to calling some OBs that we'd already interviewed. Like, this was how sure we were that this was going to end in a baby. And we'd interviewed with Dr. Crane, who is wonderful. And we interviewed with another doctor, Fabi Affleck. And, you know, we called her because my gynecologist, who I only really saw for pap smears, she was like booked up with surgeries. She could get me in like in two weeks and I just couldn't bear the thought. And I thought by then I'd probably pass it naturally by then and then ruin the chances of testing the tissue, which would tell us if there was a genetic abnormality, if something they missed, you know. And so Dr. Fabi got me in like the next day. And it was such a blessing.

AIMEE CARRERO: And it was so traumatic, like my husband had to go pick up a kit, the Natara kit, and we were just beside ourselves with grief. We had no idea that, you know, this could happen. I

mean, you think it could happen, but you're like, oh, that happens to other people. I don't know. Like, it's a weird thing that your brain sort of separates itself from because you just don't want to think about it. I don't know.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: For you, it was sort of like something you were dreading.

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah, totally. For sure. So the next day, she performed the DNC. And then two weeks later, we got the news that the embryo actually was right. There are no genetic abnormalities. And so I was like, good news or bad news? Well, it was funny because I was like, well, at least it was accurate. However, what now? You know, and I had a really hard time accepting that there was going to be no answer. And by then, you know, I talked to a lot of people who had miscarriages, and it's very rare that you get an answer unless it's something like glaring chromosomal abnormality or genetic thing that happened. A lot of the time, people don't know, you know, a lot of the times they don't test the tissue or whatever.

AIMEE CARRERO: So it was like bittersweet to know that, like, OK, well, at least we could trust that our other embryos are accurately tested.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Right. But what happened?

AIMEE CARRERO: And so that was December 20, 23. And so when the new year came about, we did another round of egg retrievals because we'd only made one girl embryo, and that's the one that they put in. Because we were like, so guilty, but not so guilty. Right. So I was like, just put the best one in and they picked the only girl. And I was OK with having only boys. But my husband at that point was so heartbroken that we'd lost the only girl. And so we did another round of IVF. And honestly, I just barreled through the grief so quickly. I was like, I just want to be pregnant again. You know, I just want to start again. And it was a total.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: What a turn for you.

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah, I know. I was going to say no. Yeah. But it's like, Dad, you're never going to believe this. I'm dying to be pregnant. Yeah. And, you know, we hadn't told anybody about the pregnancy up until that point. So then the first time that my parents heard about it was bad news. We had a miscarriage and they're like, what? You're pregnant. You know, it was kind of hard for them to know how to react. I think it was hard for everybody to kind of know how to react because it was gone through all those stages. Yeah. And we hadn't announced it to anybody. They knew we'd done IVF. But, you know, I kept saying, like, we don't know what we're going to do. We don't know what we're going to do, you know, you know,

AIMEE CARRERO: stupidly trying to like keep everyone off the scent. So they weren't expecting any kind of news like that. So anyway, then our doctor was like, well, you know, it could also be maybe like a blood clotting issue or it could be an autoimmune issue. And so then I started with a ton of testing, which took me to March 2024 and we got some good answers and we were going to do another transfer. And then I booked the gig that I have now. And that was going to take us to New York. And I was like, you know what? Let's take a break from this. Let's go to New York.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I agree. Let's take a break. We're going to take a little commercial break because now it feels like the momentum is about to change. We'll be right back. So, I mean, you make some embryos, put them in the freezer, feel bad about it, put one in, have your, like, nightmare, which is very unexpected miscarriage after getting the good news, the exciting news, very hard. My wife and I went through that as well. But then you're going to get another one in there. And you want another little one of your husband. He wants another little one of you, it sounds like. And he burned through the only girl. So he made some more. And then he did this battery of testing. So what do you find out? You said you got some answers.

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah. So I found out that this wonderful rheumatologist, his name is Dr. Wallace, he, like, wrote the book on rheumatology. He did like 14 tubes of blood. And this is going to sound like a fake thing, but I swear it's a real thing. And I mean, you know this because you're a doctor. But I have elevated natural killer cells.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I knew right when I met you.

AIMEE CARRERO: You just were like, she's a killer. She's a natural killer.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: She's a killer.

AIMEE CARRERO: And he was like, look, I can't go back to that school with the nun. Yeah, I know. There's something fundamentally changed in my DNA. And he was like, look, I can't tell you 100 percent this is what happened. But your body does attack things pretty intensely, easily. And you also have MTHFR mutation, which a lot of doctors think is kind of junk science. So I won't make a big deal about that. You know, he was like, that could cause miscarriage and blood clotting issues that maybe you wouldn't test positive for, like, factor five Leiden or something like that, but can elevate your, I don't know the word, homeocysteine. Who knows? I don't really know the scientific term, but he was like, you know,

AIMEE CARRERO: this can cause blood clotting in pregnancy plus the natural killer cells. So we changed the protocol and he put me on immune suppressant drugs and a blood thinner. And so that was going to be the plan when we came back from filming the first season of Your Friends and Neighbors, which is the show that I'm currently filming in New York. So, you know, I looked at my husband. I was like, let's take the summer off. Like, why don't we also like just try naturally? We've never tried like, let's just have fun. Like, let's go out to New York, you know, go out and have martinis and go home and try it out, you know, like kind of that. We were going to have a fun New York summer. And we did have a fun New York summer.

AIMEE CARRERO: And we tried a couple of times and both times. I think I don't have any, you know, proof of this because I'd never went in for an HCG. But I tested positive on two tests in those months. And then it got lighter and lighter and lighter. So I'm assuming maybe those were chemicals. I don't know.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: On the P-sticks?

AIMEE CARRERO: On the P-sticks, yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Did you get excited or you were skeptical?

AIMEE CARRERO: Oh, I was so excited. I was like, oh, my gosh, like we could do this naturally. We've never tried this. First time trying like, wow, look at us, you know. But I will say it wasn't as heartbroken. Only because at least to me, having gone through, I'm really pregnant. Like I've seen the sack in the uterus. You know, this kind of felt like the excitement. And then the next day it was a little lighter and then lighter and lighter and lighter. It was definitely disappointing, but it didn't feel the same. It didn't feel as heartbreaking as the first, you know.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I mean, they basically told you, you like attack your embryos.

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah. And then I still was like, let's try naturally, you know, it was not.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: No, I just wonder if that like makes you even more nervous. Like, am I always going to attack the embryo?

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah. Yeah. For some reason, I thought, well, you know, if I get pregnant naturally, I can always go on these, you know, Lovanox. Exactly. And we could do that quickly. You know, I can't say for sure like, oh, I had two chemicals. You know, I don't know. But that was like the pee stick version of that. It leads me to believe that's what happened. So, you know, we did the first season. We had a great time in New York. And then we went back to L.A. in August. And by September, we were pregnant after doing a second transfer with a new protocol.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: What did you put in?

AIMEE CARRERO: Well, funny story. I was like, put in the best one. We don't care. We had one girl. Again, we only made one. Like even when we did the second one, we made one girl. We like put in the best one. Don't tell us. We want to be surprised at birth. I had this fantasy that I was going to like first deliver in L.A. and be able to like lift my baby and have that surprise. And then the day of the transfer, we went in and we told everyone from the front desk person to the doctor. We were like, we don't want to do the sex. We don't want to do the sex. And so at the end of it, we do this whole exciting thing. And the doctor is like, you want to see a picture of the embryo? We're like, sure. And there was like an XX next to the thing.

AIMEE CARRERO: I'm an actor, but I took high school biology. But I was the only one that saw it. And so I looked at my husband. I was like, do you want to know? And he was like, yes, I'm desperate to know. And I'm like, they put the girl in. And he just started crying because he was so he really wants to go. He really. Yeah. And that is the pregnancy that I have now.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And so the belly you're sporting today.

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah. Yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: How was pregnancy for you?

AIMEE CARRERO: You know, the first trimester was really tough. I was super sick. I was throwing up every day and I always know. So I'd finished the first season. Yeah, I love to work. So I go through like the post show blues, you know, a little bit. And I was going through the post show blues where I

was like, I don't have a job anymore. I have nowhere to be. I'm just throwing up all day and eating like all the wrong things. All I wanted was like fresh deli meats, you know, like sushi.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: The whole book of what?

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah, just the whole book of whatever martinis, you know. I didn't have that, but I did have a couple of Jersey Mike subs that I would like sadly put in the microwave to try to like cook the meat. It's disgusting anyway.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, because of the deli meat.

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah. And then I read this book that was like you're worse off eating a plate of spinach, you know, Emily Oster. Yeah. Yeah. Oh, expecting better, which really changed my tune about the. And then I got an aversion to the deli meat. And then the weirdest aversion I had was to leather goods. So I couldn't even wear like handbags and like shoes that had leather. Yeah. So it was a really, really rough first trimester. My husband went back to school. He's in grad school. So I was alone. I was sick. I wasn't working. I felt like a total kind of like loser. And I, you know, really self isolated because we chose not to tell anybody about the pregnancy. And looking back, I don't know if that was the smartest thing for us

AIMEE CARRERO: for mental health wise, but we didn't know family. We didn't tell them until we were 16 weeks.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, I thought they were going to hear about it here first.

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah. Surprise. Yeah. We didn't tell anybody till 16 weeks, which is why? Superstition, I guess. I don't know. I don't have a good answer. You know, we wanted to get through the 12 week scan. But then what happened was Christmas was coming up and we just had Thanksgiving. I was sick as a dog and nobody in his family was like, they were like, are you OK? And I'm like, yeah, I'm just sick. You know, we weren't fooling anybody at that point. I don't think they thought we were pregnant, but because they were sensitive about the miscarriage from before, you know, so they weren't like, you're pregnant. But, you know, I think. Yeah, but I think they were like something fishy is going on. And then Christmas was coming up

AIMEE CARRERO: and we just couldn't keep up the facade anymore. And so, you know, my brother's wife was pregnant and 10 weeks ahead of me at that point. So, you know, we told my brother and his wife first, and they helped us sort of surprise my parents with the news. And they were obviously like so excited. And so now my parents are getting no before Christmas, because I was already kind of showing. And I knew my mom was going to take one look at me in person and be like, yeah, you're pregnant. Like, you know what I mean? I just couldn't lie to her in person. It was easier to do on the phone because you're not there. But I knew she was just going to take one look at me and be like, girl, who are you trying to fool?

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Was she surprised that you were almost halfway through the pregnancy?

AIMEE CARRERO: Yes, they were very surprised. And I was shocked that they weren't like upset. You know, I was shocked that they were just so cool about not knowing. But also, I thought, you

know, they were so excited about my brother's news. And that was the thing we talked about a lot during FaceTimes and family FaceTimes and stuff like that and over Thanksgiving and over the months. So I don't think it was in there. They were distracted by other things. But, you know, my brother lives in Brooklyn with his wife. And so my parents this summer are getting two granddaughters for the price of one. So they just have to take one.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Well, in your case, for the price of seven.

AIMEE CARRERO: For the price of seven, yeah.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Totally. Oh, that's nice.

AIMEE CARRERO: I double that. Yeah, they're really happy.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And your kid already has a fresh cousin.

AIMEE CARRERO: Exactly. So it's really, really nice.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: But what about the later stages of pregnancy?

AIMEE CARRERO: Second trimester, you know, I was throwing up until 22 weeks. And I'd gotten on... You're all in? Yeah. Yeah. I'd gotten on Diclegious and Reglan. And that really helped. I'm still on it. I tried to get off the other day. I skipped a dose and I was like, the next day. And I'm like in my third trimester. So maybe it just came back. So I'm still on that, which doesn't feel great. You know, you don't want to be super medicated during pregnancy, but it was the best I could do. So now I just take one dose at night. But at the peak, I was taking like three doses a day of each. I mean, I always joke like Reglan's like the opposite of ozempic. It like takes the food out of your stomach like faster than it does. It's like the opposite of gastric.

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah. So I'm like, it was like ravenous any time I would take it. But the third trimester has been better because I've gone back to work. And I do love to work, even though the physical, you know, aches and pains or what they are, it's been really nice to have something to do.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: When did you tell the show that you're pregnant?

AIMEE CARRERO: So I waited until about 20 weeks. I was really nervous to tell the show because, you know, everybody's like, well, they can't fire a pregnant woman. But when you're on a TV series, if you're not actively shooting it, you know, they have to pick up your option every year or every season.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Right. So you complete a season.

AIMEE CARRERO: You're no longer employed. You have to wait for them to pick your option up. And so I was really nervous that they were going to have like a terrible reaction and they were going to say you're fired or whatever. So I waited until 20 weeks after the anatomy scan. And I was like, OK, this is really happening. And I told my boss and he had a wonderful reaction. And, you know, I thought maybe they'd write it in. And he was like, no, no, no, we're going to digitally remove your belly. And I was like, great. First of all, sign me up for that. Well, what's funny is that, I mean, not to like tell stories out of school, but like I knew a guy whose only job was to airbrush Tom Cruise's under eye bags in post and like Ryan.

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah. Ryan Murphy's shows, they have like a budget to remove the lace from the wigs. So this has been going on for a long time. You know, people have had the science available to them for a long time to do airbrushing after the fact.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: How do you shoot it?

AIMEE CARRERO: Well, I thought I was going to have like a green screen on my belly. But it turns out they do it with I don't know. This is very complicated visual effects that I don't understand, but they do it in plates. So like, let's say we're shooting a scene at a restaurant, you know, or at a deli counter, we're standing up like we'll do this scene and then they'll take me out of it and shoot just the background of the deli. And then I guess they can isolate me and slim me down and then put me back into the background.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah. Yeah. Oh, wow. I really want that for myself.

AIMEE CARRERO: I mean, it sounds amazing.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I can't imagine it's cheap, but it's Apple TV. So they have the budget.

AIMEE CARRERO: They got some dough.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Wait a second. Can you tell me about the character?

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah. So, I mean, do you care about spoilers? I mean, unless you do. No, I don't care. Maybe. OK, for your listeners, if you're watching your friends and neighbors, which came out this April, the first season came out in April. We're currently filming the second season. But essentially, the storyline is Jon Hamm of Mad Men. You know, a claim plays this finance guy who's like very high up, has a really important job in Manhattan, but lives in Connecticut and has this beautiful wife played by Amanda Pied and these kids that love him. And then he loses everything in very quick succession. He loses his job under weird circumstances. His wife cheats on him with his best friend played by Mark Tallman,

AIMEE CARRERO: who's like the most lovable guy you hate to hate. Like, it's impossible to hate this man. And then his kids are like blaming him for the divorce. And the divorce was expensive. And then he loses his job. Right. And so in an attempt to keep up with the Joneses and keep up with the lifestyle, he starts stealing from his friends and neighbors because he's like, hmm, I know what Rolexes I've seen, you know, or haven't seen in a while. I know when they're going out of town, I know they don't lock their doors at night, stuff like that. And so I catch him in the act of stealing an NBA championship ring. But instead of calling the cops, I blackmail him into essentially making me his partner and cutting you in, cutting me in on the deal.

AIMEE CARRERO: And what I bring to the table, my character, Elena, brings to the table. She's got a lot of street smarts. You know, she's not from that part of the world. She works as a housekeeper in the house that he tried to burglarize. So, you know, she's like the first line is like, are you stupid? Like, you thought you were going to get away with stealing an NBA championship ring? Who are you going to sell it to? You know what I mean? She's like got a lot of kind of street smarts. And so they make a good team. And, you know, obviously, the show's about other things like about his life and his private

life and all of that. And it gets into everybody's kind of private life. But that's my character. And so when I told them I was pregnant, I was like,

AIMEE CARRERO: I don't think Elena would be pregnant. I don't know. I think she is not her cup of tea. She's in a criminal ring of burglary. Like, I don't think it's what would be right for her character. And thankfully, they agreed. And so I'm just shooting the show as if, you know, I wasn't. So I'm doing a lot of like car scenes and but, you know, they didn't want to do like the big handbags and stuff. They were like, we're not going to do that. It's a full shot. We're going to digitally remove it. And, you know, but we'll do some where you're in the car. And it's just like a close up of your face and stuff like that. So, you know, it's been really cool. And so they front loaded my work. So this season, we're doing 10 episodes.

AIMEE CARRERO: So even though right now they might be filming episode three, I've filmed the first half, like one through five of my scenes. And then I have like a truncated maternity leave. And then I go back in July and finish off the back five.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: How soon after your due date? Five weeks. Holy moly.

AIMEE CARRERO: You can imagine eight weeks. I know it is short, short, short. And so that's why I was like texting you. You know, I don't think this is a shock to your listeners. I think, you know, the bulk of your listeners are interested in kind of like a crunchier path, if you will, you know, a more natural. I don't know. It leans green. I don't want to use natural because, you know, everything's natural. But like in L.A., I sought out an OB that was like very kind of like low C-section rate, you know, not induction happy. And so when I realized the show got picked up, which I was not expecting because I do a lot of shows that don't get picked up for anything. You know what I mean? Like you just never assume the best as an actor, you assume the worst.

AIMEE CARRERO: So when I had to find a new team, you know, and I had to do a lot I had Laurie Bregman, who was like the first person I hired even before an OB. I was like, I know I want her to be my doula. We found ourselves having to find a whole new team out here. And I think anybody who's given birth in New York who has a desire to lean green will tell you it's a lot less green leaning than L.A. And so you don't have as many options.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I want to learn all about what you're planning for birth, which is very right around the corner. Yes. But I do have one curious question still about your belly on friends and neighbors. Yeah. Did it get in the way at all?

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah. OK. They will kill me if I give a spoiler, so I won't. But there are scenes that are just not comfortable to do when you're pregnant. You know, you don't feel like super attractive or sexy. And, you know, my character has this side of her that is that she uses her feminine wiles and not all the time, but, you know, when it's appropriate, she'll throw down the metaphorical strap. You know what I mean? Like the shoulder strap, if you will. And I had to shoot this scene where I was like trying to flirt with someone. And it was just impossible. I was like, I look like a bowling ball. There's just no way that this poor actor could even like muster, you know, like a fake flirtation with me.

AIMEE CARRERO: So, yeah, it gets in the way of me suspending my disbelief sometimes, for sure. But everyone's been really nice and no one's made a comment. You know, everyone's been like very

supportive. And they'll be like, from the back, you can't tell, you know, like all the grips, like the electric guys will just be like, wow, man, from the back, you really can't tell. You look great. You know, I'm like, good thing my face is on my back. But yeah, everyone's been really, really cool about it.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: It sounds like they really went the extra mile for you, which is very nice.

AIMEE CARRERO: They really did. Yeah. I've been just pleasantly surprised at every turn.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: All right. Let's take one more break. When we come back, let's find out what you have in mind for this birth, which could happen at any time. We'll be right back. Welcome back. We're talking to Amy Carrero and we're almost here. You're 38 weeks, which is knee deep into term term being, you know, the part of the target of your shooting archery is the whole target. So if you have the baby before 37 weeks, that's pre term, but now you're term and it lasts for a while. So it's a funny time. You could have the baby tonight or you could have the baby in a month from now.

AIMEE CARRERO: It's the weirdest limbo. Yeah, it's very strange to be here, but I always assumed she would come early, but I don't know. I don't think she's gonna think she's going to wait. So at 38 weeks, no signs. Listen, everything can be a sign if you want it to be. And I read somewhere I was like, does this mean this? And they're like, no, it just means you're late in your pregnancy. That's the only thing it means. But like, you know, I've been having a lot of like pelvic pain, a lot of back pain. I probably there was a chiropractor. Listen, I mourn every day that I'm not able to make an appointment and see you.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You and me both.

AIMEE CARRERO: And if I had only known, I would have reached out to Apple TV and put it in the contract. Oh, my gosh, that would have been so clutch. And not only that, but you could have done everybody in the cast. You need to be pregnant to get the magic hands of Dr. Berlin. And with my Saga, I could have even done a little something.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You could have been a friend or neighbor, a friend and neighbor with my NBA

AIMEE CARRERO: ring. Yes, exactly. So, yeah, I've been doing all this stuff. Like I do the tea. I do the dates. I've been doing the primrose oil, which I thought everybody did. And I texted all my friends. I'm like, you're doing the primrose.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Did you put it in your mouth or you put it down?

AIMEE CARRERO: I put it downtown. Both or just downtown, just downtown, because I read this thing where it was like the studies only show that it only works when you put it vaginally. OK. And so I was like, OK, I'll do that. You know, I'm cool. I'm a modern woman. And then I even went to the pelvic floor therapist thinking, I'm like, I am so ahead. I'm going to go to the pelvic floor therapist so she can teach me how to push. And let me tell you, it was the most sobering experience of my entire pregnancy, because did men go to the pelvic floor?

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, yeah, men do. I thought I've never pushed a baby out of me. If that's what you're asking. But we do have other pelvic health things to go to the therapist for.

AIMEE CARRERO: I don't know if you've ever been to one, but you like to pass. You like to be a straight A student. I felt like I got an F on that test. OK. OK. Because I had a lot of work to do, sir, apparently.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Well, did she like tell you to push and sort of feel if you were pushing?

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah. So that part was actually the only part I did well.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: So what did you feel?

AIMEE CARRERO: I failed in that. I should have been working on my pelvic floor. It's too tight. Should have been working on that the whole time. So she sent me home with like a set of dilators. And I'm like, I'm 38 weeks pregnant. Should I do these things now? Like, is my vagina just RIP? Like, does it have a chance to survive this birth? Because, you know, it was very painful, this like pelvic exam. And so I left feeling like, man, I should have started this journey a long time ago.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: But on the flip side, the elephants never do it. Like, we're the only ones who do crap like that. Yeah. The other animals have. Oh, the elephants never do. Right, right, right. They never do it.

AIMEE CARRERO: So like, I'm into it. I'm not against it, but I'm just like, don't sell yourself short. Yeah, yeah. And that's what like, you know, I told my doula's that. And they were like, don't worry about it. Like, it's meant to stretch, you know. But I was curious about the perineal massage and I was curious about all that stuff, because, you know, now I'm on maternity leave. I have nothing else to do but worry about that. And so, you know, I wanted her to teach me how to do that, too. And so she did. But, you know, I had to buy these expensive silicone dilators that now I like just have airing out when I wash them and put them on the counter of the kitchen.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You know, I can't wait to come over for dinner. Yeah. Yeah. But also something that's really important to note is during labor, you're going to have a poop ton of oxytocin flowing through your bloodstream, which makes everything incredibly more stretchy. So, you know, when you try to do something like that and you're far from an oxytocin state, it's going to be a totally different experience than, you know, when you have raging oxytocin in your blood. I was so far from an oxytocin state.

AIMEE CARRERO: Let me tell you, it's not really an oxytocin setting. No. And I don't know if this is too much for this segment, but she wanted to stick her finger out my butt. Oh, why? To check because it's all connected. And I was like, not today. Interesting. Very thorough. Very thorough. And I was like, not today. Thanks. But like, you know, it was just a lot. It was not a comfortable experience. And yet I'm going back tomorrow. So that just tells you what you need to know about my personality.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: No, definitely not. I mean, now inquiring might want to know if you're going to go for the dessert tomorrow or you're just going to keep it where it was.

AIMEE CARRERO: I'm going to keep it where it was. I'm going to tell her, like, you have your limits. Yeah, my limits.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And you know, from the back, you don't even look pregnant.

AIMEE CARRERO: Totally. Thank you. Call back. Yeah. So I'm doing the things I'm trying to prepare. I'm trying to be a good student about it. But if this pregnancy has taught me anything is that you're not in control and you just got to be flexible. If you're not flexible from your attitude to your pelvic floor, you're not getting anywhere.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You should bumper sticker that. Yeah. OK, so we're winding down here. Page one of your birth. I always recommend that your birth plan is a flow chart. Page one, you put what you're aiming for. If all things could go how I want them. This is what I would like my birth to be like.

AIMEE CARRERO: What's page one? Page one is spontaneous labor and laboring at home as long as possible with my doulas. But, you know, got to take an Uber to the hospital. So can't labor too long at home because I don't know. Ubers, are they going to say no? Like, am I going to have to wait to get the right one? It's like a whole thing.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, it's an Uber pet and now Uber labor birth. Yeah. Are they worried about the water breaking?

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah, well, I've asked Uber drivers this when I go into Ubers. Now I'm like, have you ever driven someone in labor? And most of them are like, yeah. And then one guy was like, yeah. And her water broke in my car. And even a deep cleaning didn't fix it to get a new car. And I was like, oh, my God, that will not happen to me. Yeah, totally. So, yeah, I would labor at home as long as possible. In New York, they offer you nitrous gas.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Well, that's nice in case you need a toothbrush

AIMEE CARRERO: while you're giving birth. Yeah. So they offer that at the hospital. I'm giving birth and I'm curious. I'm curious. I'm nitrous curious. You know what I mean? I'd like to give it a whirl. That's my bad. Yeah, nitrous curious. I mean, if I can't have a martini, I'm going to have a little gas. And apparently, like, it's very popular in Europe and stuff.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I've been to a bunch of nitrous births, actually. You have? Yeah. It's not like nitrous at the dentist. It's quite a bit different. So it's not a constant flow where you're like floating around the room, watching them do whatever they're doing out of body. It's a mask. And when you feel like you want to hit, you put the mask on your face and suck it in. And then you're supposed to actually blow it back out into the mask so it gets re-contained. I find, in case you're curious, that most of the people that I've seen do it for a very tiny number, it looks like it makes you anxious, by the way.

AIMEE CARRERO: Oh, no, I don't want that.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Just be aware that could happen and it may not be the, you know.

AIMEE CARRERO: And I'm prone to that because one time I had an edible and I was like super paranoid and never again. So, like, I'm prone to the anxious when, you know, with the substances.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, so if you do it once or twice and you feel like that anxiety building up with a little panicky feeling or like an elephant standing on your chest, I wouldn't keep doing it. But generally what happens is it doesn't take away the pain. It takes away the anxiety around the pain. So

you'll sometimes, until you get used to these surges and realize these surges are not going to harm you, not going to overwhelm you, at first adrenaline comes out. You feel a lot of fear and you're like, and the adrenaline is the exact opposite of the oxytocin. It does all the opposite to oxytocin that you don't want. So if you could take that little puff and it gets rid of the anxiety so that the surge can build up and you're not afraid of it,

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: even just several times of that will make you feel more confident.

AIMEE CARRERO: Yeah, yeah, that's really good to know.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Yeah, it could work great like that. And then sometimes you don't need it anymore. And once in a while, you're just the fear starts to come back. So you take another puff and, you know, it lasts for, I don't know, about a minute at a time. Yeah, it's really short acting.

AIMEE CARRERO: I also got a TENS machine.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Oh, you're doing all the things. I'm doing all the things.

AIMEE CARRERO: Electro-STEM. Yeah, and you know, New York, like I said, apparently the hospitals are not as, you know, if you give birth at Cedars, like golden hour is just kind of built in, delayed cord clamping kind of built in. You got to ask for these things here. And so I actually have a printed out, you know, birth plan, like asking for delayed cord clamping, golden hour, you know, to see a lactation consultants, you know, stuff like that, that would seem pretty intuitive in some other places, not so much here, but at the end of the day, I don't know if this is a birth plan more as much as a desire. I would love to keep it, like really go on the journey. You know, if people talk about the birth portal and it being like a journey,

AIMEE CARRERO: I'm interested in that part of it, the spiritual kind of part of birth. I don't think there is any experience like that, that you have access to as a person often enough. So I'm interested in that. I'm gonna see how it goes.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I'm really curious, you know, how the whole thing is gonna go for you, but you're also, you're just a great storyteller.

AIMEE CARRERO: Oh, thanks.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: And so I am really looking forward to hearing the story the way you experienced it. I feel like everything you've talked about so far in these two hours of podcasting, I can picture myself there, you know, and-

AIMEE CARRERO: Oh man, that would be so cool if you could be there,

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: but you'll be there in spirit. Who knows, maybe I'll fly out and surprise you. Fly out, demand a private room. Yes, and a booth. Booth. Anyway, it's gonna be an interesting postpartum for you because no matter how your birth goes, you've got a short window before you're back at work. I mean, five weeks, and usually the first visit with the OB is not till six weeks. So in perspective, that's gonna be an interesting time. But I know you're strong and you're healthy, and you have great support around you. And I know that you're gonna do amazing.

AIMEE CARRERO: Thank you. We'll find out and you'll be the first to know.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: I cannot wait. All right, Amy, thank you so much for spending all this time with us, with me, and sharing everything. Thank you. And I cannot say enough how much I appreciate you and I feel your energy. This is something I usually don't feel remotely, but I really feel your energy. Through the power of Zoom, and I hope you can feel back all the love and light I'm sending for an incredible experience.

AIMEE CARRERO: Yes, I do. Thank you so much. And the few times we got to meet in person were just so wonderful. So I take that to heart. Thank you. Yeah, my pleasure.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: One thing before we go, where can we find you online? On Instagram.

AIMEE CARRERO: Oh, I've heard of that. Have you heard of it? It's at Amy, A-I-M-E-E, Carrero, C-A-R-R-E-R-O. And if you go on my Instagram in the next few weeks, you will see a lot of complaints about my pelvic floor. So it's not my usual content. I promise my usual content is a little bit better. I don't know why I find this interesting as well.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: You have so many vowels. I know, that's Latina.

AIMEE CARRERO: So many vowels.

DR. ELLIOT BERLIN, DC: Latina, Latinita. Real fortune. I mean, golden numbers. Wanna buy a vowel? All of them. All right, at home, thanks for listening to the Informed Pregnancy Podcast for more parenting and pregnancy information just like this. Visit us online at informedpregnancy.com.

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