

Cerebral Palsy - When Childbirth is to Blame.

Cerebral Palsy is a severely debilitating and distressing condition which results from brain damage that may occur during pregnancy or birth. When the condition is attributed to birth trauma, it is generally due to depriving the baby's brain of oxygen and leads to damage occurring to the brain cells. Babies born prematurely are particularly susceptible to this type of injury.

The supply of oxygen to the baby's brain can be disrupted by many things that may happen during childbirth. If any of these could be avoided by the application of a greater degree of duty of care by the medical staff involved or of the hospital or hospital trust, then there is a potential case of medical negligence.

A hospital labour ward can be a hectic place. Often there are staff shortages, the consultant is off duty, only tired medical staff are available, and there are more mothers in labour than there are facilities available to cope with them. In these conditions it is not difficult to imagine that mistakes might happen.

There are many potential pitfalls. One of these is failing to respond quickly enough to baby heart rate monitors that might suggest that a baby is in difficulties. A drop of the foetal heart rate might suggest that an inadequate supply of blood is reaching the brain, however busy staff fail to either notice or take it seriously enough.

Often mothers are given drugs to initiate contractions and labour. Sometimes this is done for the convenience of the hospital rather than mother. In most cases this does not cause a problem, but it can result in excessively prolonged labour when the drugs do not work as intended. Sometimes the response is to administer more drugs, often with no effect. As a result the baby remains in the birth canal for an extended period and may be deprived of an adequate oxygen supply.

Improper use of birthing tools such as forceps and other aids can damage the baby's head and consequently the brain. Possibly it would have been better to perform a caesarean section but adequate staff or operating theatres were unavailable.

There are many other instances where cerebral palsy might have been avoided had greater care been taken. Every baby has the right to be born with all due care and attention and there are no acceptable excuses for medical negligence.

About the Author

[Cerebral Palsy](#) is a severely debilitating and distressing condition which results from brain damage that may occur during pregnancy or birth.

Source: <http://www.healthsnare.com>