

Prenatal Care: Student Nurse, Signs Of Fetal Distress Ignored.

The thirty-five year-old patient, pregnant for the first time, came to the clinic for a prenatal visit at thirty-three or thirty-four weeks.

She was seen in the clinic only by a student nurse.

The patient reportedly told the student nurse she had noticed a reduction in fetal movement over the previous few days.

The student nurse conducted a comprehensive exam. She documented elevated blood pressure, proteinuria, pitting edema from the mid-calf down and the fact the fetus was in breech presentation.

The student nurse also charted that she was unable to detect a fetal heart rate.

The student nurse relayed her findings to the clinic's nurse midwife.

The nurse midwife did not examine the patient herself or follow up with a non-stress test the same day.

A non-stress test the same day would have been non-reassuring. That most likely would have led to a decision to do the cesarean that same day.

SUPERIOR COURT
BRISTOL COUNTY, MASSACHUSETTS
August 29, 2008

The parents' case filed in the Superior Court, Bristol County, Massachusetts resulted in a \$5,000,000 settlement.

The mother did have a non-stress test, but not until the next day. The baby was quickly delivered by cesarean section, but not without profound neurological deficits. Now eleven years old, the child is significantly delayed, suffers from quadriplegia and has a j-tube. **Confidential v. Confidential**, 2008 WL 7070104 (Sup. Ct. Bristol Co., Massachusetts, August 29, 2008).