



## Two Weeks Overdue: How I Fought To Not Induce



E X P E C T F U L P R E G N A N C Y

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During my pregnancy I followed everything suggested. I ate well, napped, reduced stress, eliminated caffeine, alcohol and sushi, stayed hydrated, practiced yoga, walked, and meditated. I took classes—childbirth education, breastfeeding, infant CPR, and baby care. I hired a doula and wrote a birth plan. I was ready!

At 37 weeks I started following all the recommendations to help usher in my baby girl. I ate whole pineapples and 6 dates a day, took evening primrose oil, drank red raspberry leaf tea, dumped sriracha on everything, had sex, hip-circled on my birth ball for hours (and hours!) while watching oxytocin producing feel-good comedies, and relaxed with massages and reflexology.

But 40 weeks came and went. I wasn't dilated and my daughter hadn't even "dropped" or "engaged". My ultrasounds showed good fluid levels and a healthy placenta - baby girl was in no hurry to leave her

all-inclusive, all-expenses-paid luxury resort.

I was going to be pregnant forever.

I stress-ate all the snacks I had packed in my hospital bag and the the frozen cookies I had made in advance for the hospital staff. I stopped going out and frequenting my usual haunts because I didn't know what to say when people commented on how I was "still pregnant." My parents had arrived from out of town for a month long stay and every night at dinner my dad would say, "well maybe tonight's the night." And every night, it wasn't.

During all my preparation it never occurred to me that I might not go into spontaneous labor. But as I passed the 40 week mark friends started to share stories about how either they or their child was 10, 12, 14 days late. Many were induced. I had had no idea.

For some reason it was very important to me that I let my daughter decide when she was going to come into the world. I was ok with natural methods to gently encourage labor but the thought of medical intervention didn't feel right, especially since she was still thriving in my womb. Babies are not even considered past-due or post-term until two weeks past their due date.

Still, my doctor wanted to schedule an induction for 10 days after my due date. She was going on a vacation and didn't see a reason to wait - in her medical opinion 10 days or 14 days didn't make a difference. But it did to me. She agreed to give me some time to see if things "progressed" before making the final call. I immediately called an acupuncturist and began daily treatments - it was the one modality I hadn't tried.

At my next doctor visit baby girl had moved lower and enough for my doctor to agree, albeit reluctantly, to let me go the full two weeks before inducing. She asked one of her partners to be on-call for the delivery and said I would be getting a call from the scheduler confirming my induction time. When I got that call I was told it would be at 4AM on my 14th day, a Wednesday. At my next and final doctor appointment (they have you in many times when you are over 40 weeks) I asked if the induction could be scheduled later in the day on Wednesday, just to give my daughter a few more hours.

She rolled her eyes and replied, with a palpable tinge of aggression, "Hey, beggars can't be choosers."

They say that you can gauge the effectiveness of your [meditation](#) practice by the way you react when visiting family (or in the words of Eckhart Tolle, "If you think you are so enlightened, go and spend a week with your parents). But I would argue that you can also gauge the effectiveness of your meditation practice by your response to a statement like this being made about you and the birth of your daughter.

I breathed my way through the internal slew of profanities and rage, and held onto a river of tears bubbling up inside. I replied, calmly, "I'm not trying to be difficult I just really want to give her a chance to arrive on her own. Could you just check and see if there is a later time available?"

My meditation practice was rockin'.

This was new territory for me. I wasn't used to putting myself out there. I didn't like not being agreeable - I wanted to please and to be liked! But I also wanted my daughter to have a mom who would advocate for herself and for her.

As she looked at me she seemed to take me in. She softened. "Ok, I know it won't make a difference but if it makes you feel better, ok."

My induction was rescheduled for Wednesday at 10 PM. We had 18 extra hours. Come on, baby girl. I continued with the acupuncture treatments.

But Wednesday midday I was still pregnant and not feeling the slightest hint of a contraction. I posted something about it on Facebook and a friend recommended I eat raw eggplant - it's an Italian folk remedy and it worked for his wife. I went to Whole Foods and bought 4. I was able to get down 2 of them.

At 6 pm that evening, four hours before my scheduled induction, things started to happen. Finally! I was

in labor.

Maybe it was the eggplant, maybe it was all the acupuncture, maybe it was the prayers of well-intentioned friends and family who had been texting me for weeks asking “any news?”, or maybe, it was just the right time.

Thirty-one hours later I met my baby girl. She didn’t make it easy. She was born posterior and I had to throw my idea of an unmedicated childbirth out the window as I screamed for an epidural. And I did need a bit of Pitocin when I was stalled at 5 cm. But it worked, and my baby girl arrived at exactly as she should, when she was ready.

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*Are you pregnant or a new mom?*

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